Husbandry Spiritualized.

Or

The heavenly use of Earthly things.

By John Flavell.

London 1671.

GLASGOW
UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY:

to win them to Chriſt, and thereby make them more than ſeventy-ſeven-fold happier than before? Not to mention other incouragements to this work, which I received from the earneſt deſires of ſome Reverend and worthy Brethren inviting thereunto; all which I hope the event will manifeſt to be a call from God to this work.

I confeſs I met with ſome diſcouragement in my firſt attempt, from my unacquaintedneſs with rural affairs; and becauſe I was to travel in a path (to me) untrodden; but having once engaged in it, thoſe diſcouragements were ſoon overcome; and being now brought to what you here ſee, I offer to your hands theſe firſt fruits of my ſpare hours.

I preſume you will account it no diſparagement, that I dedicate a Book of Husbandry to Gentlemen of your quality. This is Spiritual Husbandry, *which is here taught you; and yet I muſt tell you, that great perſons have accounted that civil employment (which is much inferior to this) no diſparagement to them.* The King himſelf is ſerved by the field, *Eccl.* 5.9. *Or as* Montanus *renders the* Hebrew *Text,* Rex agro fit ſervus; *The King himſelf is a ſervant to the field. And of King* Uzziah *it is written,*

(2*Chron.*26.10.) That he loved Husbandry. *And* Amos 7.1. *we read of the* Kings mowings. *Yea,* Pliny *hath observed, That Corn was never so plentiful at* Rome, *as when the same men tilled the Land that rul'd the* Commonwealth. Quasi gauderet terra laureato vomere, scilicet & aratore triumphali; *As though the earth it self rejoyced in the Laurel Plowshare, and the triumphant Plowman.*

What pleasure you will find in reading it, I know not; but to me it hath been a pleasant path, from first to last, who yet have been at far greater expence of time and pains in compiling it, than you can be in reading it. The Husbandmans work you know, is no easie work, and the Spiritualizing of it hath greater difficulties attending it; but yet the pleasure hath abundantly recompensed the pains. I have found Erasmus *his Observation experimentally true;* Qui literis addicti summus, animi lassitudinem à studiis gravioribus contractam; ab iisdem studiis, sed amænioribus recreamus; *Those that are addicted to study, (faith he) when they have wearied their spirits with study, can recreate them again with study, by making a diversion from that which is severe*

severe and knotty, to some more facile and pleasant Subject.

But to hear that God hath used and honoured these papers to the good of any soul, will yield me the highest content and satisfaction imaginable.

May you but learn that Lesson, which is the general Scope and Design of this Book, viz. *How to walk with God from day to day, and make the several Objects you behold,* Scalæ & alæ, *Wings and Ladders to mount your souls neerer to Him, who is the Center of all blessed Spirits. How much will it comfort me, and confirm my hope, that it was the Call of God indeed which put me upon these endeavours!*

O Sirs! What an excellent thing would it be for you, to make such holy improvements of all these earthly Objects which daily incur your senses, and cause them to proclaim and preach to you Divine and heavenly Mysteries, whilst others make them groan, by abusing them to sin, and subjecting them to their lusts. A man may be cast into such a condition, wherein he cannot enjoy the blessing and benefit of a pious and powerful Ministry; but you cannot (ordinarily) fall into such a condition, wherein

any thing (except a bad heart) can deprive you of the benefits and comforts of thoſe excellent Sermons, and Divinity Lectures, which the creatures here offer to preach and read to you.

Content not your ſelves, I beſeech you, with that natural ſweetneſs the creatures afford; for thereof the beaſts are capable, as much, if not more, than you; but uſe them to thoſe ſpiritual ends you are here directed, and they will yield you a ſweetneſs far tranſcending that natural ſweetneſs you ever reliſhed in them; and indeed, you never uſe the creatures as their Lord's, *till you come to ſee* your Lord, *in and by them. I confeſs the diſcoveries of God in the Word are far more excellent, cleer and powerful*; He hath magnified his Word above all his Name. *And therein are the* unſearchable riches of Chriſt, *or rich diſcoveries of that grace that hath no footſteps in nature, as the Apoſtles expreſſion ſignifies,* Eph 3. 8.

And if that which might be known of God by the Creatures, leave men without excuſe; as it's manifeſt, Rom. 1. 20. *How inexcuſable then will thoſe be, who have received not only the teachings of the creature, but alſo the grace of the Goſpel in vain!* How ſhall we eſcape, if

if we neglect ſo great ſalvation? *They that are careleſs in the day of grace, ſhall be ſpeechleſs in the day of judgment.*

I am ſenſible of many defects in theſe Papers (as well as in my ſelf;) they have doubtleſs a taſte of the diſtractions of the times wherein they were written; nor was I willing to keep them ſo long under-hand, as the accurateneſs and exactneſs with which ſuch a ſubject ought to be handled did require. Had I deſigned my own credit, I ſhould have obſerved that counſel —— Nonumque prematur in annum, *(i. e.) To have kept it much longer under the file, before I had expoſed it to publick view; but I rather inclined to* Solomons *counſel,* Whatever thy hand finds out to do, do it with all thy might; for there is no wiſdom, nor knowledge, nor device in the grave, whither thou art going, *Eccleſ.* 9. 10.

I apprehended a neceſſity of ſome ſuch means to be uſed, for the inſtruction and conviction of countrey people; who either are not capable of underſtanding truth in another Dialect, or at leaſt, are leſs affected with it. The Propoſition *in every Chapter conſiſts of an Obſervation in Husbandry; Wherein, if I have failed in*

uſing

using any improper expression, your candour will cover it, and impute it to my unacquaintedness in rural affairs —— In magnis voluisse sat est.

The Reddition, *or* Application, *you will find (I hope) both pertinent and close. The* Reflections *serious, and such (as I hope) your Consciences will faithfully improve. I have shut up every Chapter with a* Poem, *an innocent Bait to catch the Readers Soul.*

That of Herbert *is experimentally true.*

A Verse may find him that a Sermon flies.
And turn delight into a Sacrifice.

I should never have been perswaded (especially in this scribling Age, wherein we may complain with the Poet.

Scribimus indocti, doctiq; poemata passim)

To have set my dull fancy upon the Rack to extort a Poem to entertain my Reader; for I cannot say with Ovid, Sponte sua carmen, *&c. but that I have been informed, that many Seamen induced by the pleasure of a Verse, have taken much pains to learn the* Poems *in their* Compass *by heart; and I hope both the Children at home, and the Servants in the fields, will*

will learn to exerciſe themſelves this way alſo. O, how much better will it be ſo to do, than to ſtuff their memories with obſcene Ballads and filthy Songs, which corrupt their minds, and diſpoſe them to much wickedneſs, by irritating their natural corruption! but theſe are purer flames, you will find nothing here of ſuch a tendency.

'Tis guilt, not Poetry, to be like thoſe
Whoſe wit in Verſe, is downright ſin in Proſe.
Whoſe ſtudies are prophaneneſs, as if then
They only were good Poets; when bad men.

D. D g.

I ſhall add no more, but to beg that God who inſtructeth the Husbandman in his civil Calling, to teach him wiſdom ſpiritually to improve it; and particularly, that you may reap a crop of much ſpiritual benefit, from that ſeed which is here ſown by the hand of the Lords unprofitable ſervant, and in him,

Your very affectionate
Friend and Servant,

JOHN FLAVELL.

To

TO THE Christian Reader

THere are three things wherein (as it hath been said, long before my day) the exercise of Godliness doth chiefly consist: Prayer, Temptation, Meditation. Meditation is the Subject of this following Manual. The Object of Meditation is twofold. First, The Word: Secondly, The Works of God. The Works of God are twofold. First, Internal. Secondly, External. The External Works of God are twofold. First, Of Creation: Secondly, of Providence. The works of Providence are likewise twofold. First, In thing Civil, the Lord ordering and over-ruling all the affairs and motion of single Persons, Families and Nations, in a subserviency to his own most holy Ends, Designs and Purposes: Secondly, In things Natural, the Lord instructing the Husbandman to discretion, and teaching him how to Dress and Till the Earth, that it may give Seed to the Sower, and Bread to the Eater; as also how to breed up and manage the Beasts of the field, both greater and lesser Cattel, for the use and service of Man.

Meditation upon this lower part of the Works

of God, and his wonderful Providences about them, may raise our souls very high; and while we wisely consider these natural things, we may grow more and more wise, in and for Spirituals and Eternals.

The worthy and ingenious Author of the ensuing Discourse, hath supplyed us with an excellent help, for the Spiritualizing of the providential Works of God in natural things, by godly Meditations; we chiefly want the help of the holy Spirit (without which all other helps and helpers are altogether insufficient) to frame and wind up our hearts, for this, both profitable and delightful duty; yet the help which the Lord is pleased to give us for our direction in it, by the Ministery of man, is not only, not to be refused, but thankfully received and improved; and all little enough to bring our minds to, or keep them at this work: The best of Saints (on this side heaven) have (though they are not earthly minded) much earth in their minds; which like a heavy clog at their heels, or a weight at their hearts, presseth them down when they would make an Essay to mount upward in Meditation. We find it no easie matter to keep off earthly thoughts, when we are most seriously engaged in heavenly work; how hard is it then to get in, and be fixed upon heavenly thoughts while we are engaged about earthly work; yea, are for so is the Husbandman) working the very earth, and raking in the bowels of it. 'Tis a great part of our holiness to be spiritually minded, while we are conversing with God through Jesus Christ in spiritual duties; but to be spiritually minded, and to mind spiritual things, when we are conversing with the clods of the earth, and the furrows of the field, when

we

we have to do with Corn and Grass, with Trees and Plants, with Sheep and Oxen, when we behold the birds and fowls of the Air, the worms, and all that creep upon the ground, then (I say) to be spiritually minded, and thence to have our thoughts ascending and soaring up to God, in heart-affecting and quickning contemplations, witnesseth an high degree of holiness, and of gracious attainments. To make a ladder out of earthly materials, for the raising of our selves in spirit up to heaven, is the *Art of Arts*. Holy and happy indeed are they! who (being taught of God) have learned this Art, and live in the daily practise of it. Earthly Objects usually hinder us in our way, sometimes turn us quite out of our way to heaven. Many plow and sow, dig and delve the earth, till their hearts become as earthly as the earth it self: many deal about the beasts of the field, till themselves become even brutish. Is it not then a blessed design which this Author aims and drives at, so to spiritualize all sorts, or the whole compass of earthly Husbandry, that all sorts of husbandmen may become spiritual & heavenly? It seems to me a token for good, that God hath an intendment of some special good to the souls of such as are by profession proper Husbandmen, seeing he hath lately put it into the hearts of two faithful Ministers (who with all of that profession, are Husbandmen in a figure) to undertake though in a different way, this Subject, and to publish their labours in print, that they may be of use, not only for the present age, but for posterity.

Mr. *Richard Steel*, and this Author.

And that the Husbandman may be pleased, as well as profited, in perusing the labours of this Author, he hath, with singular aptness and acuteness,

contrived and contracted the sum or scope of every Chapter into an elegant Distich or pair of Verses, placed at the head of it, & concluded it with a choice melodious Poem sutable to, and dilating upon the whole matter of it. These the Husbandman, who can but read, may quickly learn and sing for his solace, instead of those vain Ballads and corrupting Rimes, which many of that rank are apt to buy, and solace themselves withal, without any benefit, yea, much to their hurt, making their hearts more corrupt, carnal and vain thereby.

Let me add one word more to the Reader. This Book of *Husbandry Spiritualized*, is not calculated only for the common Husbandman; persons of any calling or condition, may find the Author working out such searching Reflections and strong Convictions, from almost every part and particular of the Husbandmans work, as may prove, if faithfully improved, very useful to them; to some for their awakening, to consider the state of their souls, whether in grace or in nature; to others for their instruction, consolation and encouragement in the wayes of grace, as also for their proficiency & growth in those wayes. That the blessing of the Lord, and the breathings of his good Spirit may go out with it, for all those gracious purposes, is the hearts desire and prayer of him, who is,

Christian Reader,

A sincere well-wisher to thy precious and immortal soul:

JOSEPH CARYL.

To his Reverend and learned Friend, Mr. *John Flavell*, on his Spiritual Navigation and Husbandry.

LEtters of Mart to his dear Servant given,
By him that fists the ruffling winds of heaven:
To fight, and take all such as would not daign
T'acknowledge him the Seas great Soveraign.
He lanch'd his little *Pinace*, and began
T'attaque the vassals of *Leviathan*.
Auspicious gales swelling his winged Sails,
Searches all creeks, and every Bark he hails,
That scarce a Ship our Western Coasts afford
Which this brave *Pinace* hath not laid aboard.
And what among our riddles some might count,
Was seen at once at *Barwick*, and the *Mount*.
Yea, in more *Ports* hath in one *lustre* been,
Than *Hawkins*, *Drake*, or *Cavendish* have seen.
And Prizes of more worth brought home again,
Than all the *Plate-Fleets* of the Kings of *Spain*.
But that which makes the wonder swell the more,
Those whom he took were *Beggars* all before.
But rests he here? No, no, our friend doth know
'Tis good to have two strings unto his Bow.
Our rare *Amphibion* loves not to be pent
Within the bounds, of one poor Element,
Besides the learned Author understood,
That of an idle hand there comes no good,
The Law to him no *Pulpit* doth allow,
And now he cannot *Preach*, he means to *Plow*

Though

Though *Preaching* were a crime, yet he foreſaw
Againſt the *Plowman* there could be no Law.
Nor ſtayes he on reſolves, but out of hand
He yoaks his Teem, plows up the ſtubborn Land:
Sows it with precious Seed, harrows again
The tougher clods: takes pleaſure in his pain.
Whilſt *Orphus* like, (which doth his Art advance)
Rocks, Fields, and Wood *after his pipe do dance.*

Induſtrious ſpirit, to what a rich account
With thy bleſt Lord, will all theſe labours mount?
That every nerve of thy bleſt ſoul doſt ply,
To further heavens *Spiritual Husbandry.*
This kind of Tillage which thou teacheſt us.
Was never dreamt of *Triptolemus.*
Go Reader, turn the leaves; and me allow.
To pray (whilſt at thy work) *God ſpeed the Plow.*

NICHOLAS WATTS.

In Authoris OPERA.

LEt *Paracelſus* and *Van-Helmont's* name,
No more ride triumph on the wings of fame.
Lo, here's a *Chymiſt* whoſe diviner skill
Doth *hallowed*, from unhallow'd things diſtil.
Spiritualizeth Sea affairs, agen,
Makes the rude ground turn Tutor unto men.
Shews *Mariners* as by a *Compaſs* how
They may unto the *Port* of Glory row.
Teacheth the *Plowmen* from their work to know
What duties unto God and man they ow.
Rare Artiſt! who when many tongues are mute
Mak'ſt things that are inanimate, confute
The Ages ſins; by preaching unto eyes,
Truths which in other modes, their ears deſpiſe.
Proſper his pious labours, Lord! howe'r
Do not forget to crown the labourer.

Sic raptim canit,

DAN. CONDY.

To his Reverend and Invaluable Friend Mr. I. F. upon his Husbandry Spiritualized.

INgenious Sir, what do I ſee? what now!
Are you come from the Pulpit to the Plow?
If ſo, then pardon me if I profeſs;
The Plow deſerves to be ſent to the Preſs.
'Tis not long ſince you went to Sea they ſay,
Compos'd a * Compaſs which directs the way
And ſteers the courſe to heaven, O bleſt Art!
And bravely done, that you did that impart
To us, who take it kindly at your hand,
And bleſs the Lord that you are come to Land.
To be an Husbandman wherein your skill
With admiration doth your Readers fill.
One grain will yield increaſe, it's ten times ten,
When th'earth's manur'd by ſuch Husbandmen.
We may expect rich harveſts, and full crops.
When heavenly dew decendeth in ſuch drops
Of ſpiritual rain, to water every field
That it full heaps of grace to God may yield.
I muſt adore the wiſdom of that God
That makes men wiſe, who even from a clod
Of earth can raiſe ſuch heavenly Meditation
Unto a pitch of higheſt elevation.
Beſides, I mark the goodneſs of the Lord
Performing unto us his faithful Word,

* *Navigation ſpiritualized.*

That all ſhall work for good unto the Saints
Which in ſome meaſure leſſens our complaints.
For though our Pulpit mercies be grown leſs,
We have ſome gracious helps yet from the Preſs.
And herein all the world may plainly ſee,
That faithful ſervants will not idle be.
We have ſome bricks, although the ſtraw be gone.
The Church at laſt be of polliſht ſtone.
What ever men or Devils act, or ſay,
Sion at laſt will have a glorious day.
The wretched muck-worm that from morn to night
Labours as if 'twere for an heavenly weight,
And when he hath got all he can, the moſt
Amounts to little more than a poor curſt
To feed his tired carkaſe, if himſelf
Have by his carking got a little pelf
Leave it he muſt, to one he knows not whom,
And then muſt come to eternal doom;
And hear his poor neglected wretched ſoul
Tell him at laſt that he hath play'd the fool.
But here he's taught how he before he dye
May lay up treaſure for eternitys
Wherein he may be rich, yea, much much more
Than they that do poſſeſs whole Mines of Oar.
When earth's more worth than heaven, & gold than grace
Then let the worldling run his brutiſh race,
But not before unleſs he do intend
To meet with ſoul-deſtruction in the end.
But I muſt leave him, and return again
To gratulate the Author for his pain.
And here I can't forbear to let my pen
To tell the world of all the Husbandmen
That e're I met, he, he hath hit the vein
To recompenſe the Labourers hard pain,
And taught him how to get the greateſt gain.
Wherein he treads a path not trod before,
By which indeed his skill appears the more.

I might *Encomiums* give him great and true,
And yet come very ſhort of what's his due.
But I muſt not walk in forbidden wayes
For thereby I am ſure I ſhould diſpleaſe
His pious mind, who doth and freely can
Give all the praiſe to the great Husbandman.
Who will his graces in his ſervants own,
But doth expect himſelf to wear the Crown,
Farewel dear Sir, I take my leave, and now
Will ſay no more but this, *God ſpeed the Plow.*

EDWARD JEFFERY.

THE

THE

EPISTLE

TO THE

Inteligent Countrey READER.

THOU hast here the fruit of some of my spare Hours, which were thus imployed, when by a sad Providence I was thrust from the Society o' many dear Friends, into a solitary Countrey dwelling. I hope none will envy me these innocent delights, which I made out of my lonely walks, whereby the Lord sweetned my solitudes there. 'Tis like thou wilt find some Passages here, that are harmlesly pleasant; yet, I assure thee, I know of none that the most Cynical Reader can censure, as sinfully light and vain. I must acknowledge to the praise of God, that I have found some of those (which possibly some of my Readers will call the slightest and most trifling subjects of meditation) to be the Ordinances for

Inſtruction, Caution, *and* Conſolation *to my own ſoul: yea, ſuch a degree of comfort, I do profeſs, to have found by theſe things, as hath much endeared the Countrey life to me, and made me much better to underſtand that ſaying of* Horace, *than when I learn'd it at School,*

Hor. *Sat.* 6. Noviſtine locum potiorem rure beato?
Eſt ubi plus tepeant hyems? ubi gratior aura?
O rus, quando te aſpiciam? quandoque licebit
Nunc veterum libris, nunc ſomno, & inertibus horis
Ducere ſolicitæ jucunda oblivia vitæ, (*i. e.*)
What life can with the Country life compare?
Where breaths the pureſt, and moſt healthful Air.
Where undiſturb'd, my ſtudies I purſue;
And when I ſleep, bid all my cares adieu.

And what I have found ſo beneficial to my ſelf, I cannot but think may be ſo to others. I aſſure thee Reader, I am not fond of any of theſe conceptions; and yet I think, I may modeſtly enough ſay, That the emptieſt leaf in this Book, may ſerve for more and better uſes than a meer diverſion, when thou canſt find leiſure to peruſe it. I know, your troubles and cares are many, and though your condition of life hath many innocent comforts, and outward mercies to ſweeten it, yet I believe moſt of you have found, that ancient ſaying of Anaxion *experimentally true,* Ἔχει τι πικρὸν τῆς γεωργίας γλυκύ

Some bitter troubles Countrey men do meet,
Wherewith the Lord doth intermix their ſweet.

The cares *of your* minds, *are commonly no leſs than the* pains *of your* Bodies; *it concerns you therefore, to* ſweeten

ſweeten *what you cannot* avoid; *and I know no better way for that than what is here directed to. O friends! what advantages have you, for a ſpiritual life? Why may you not have two Harveſts every year? one for your Souls, another for your Bodies; if you could thus learn to husband your Husbandry. Methinks ſpiritual Meditations do even put themſelves upon you. Husbandmen of old were generally preſumed to be honeſt and good men; what elſe means that ſaying of* Menander, Ἀγροικον εἶναι τρόσποιῆ πόνερον ὤν.

Profeſs thy ſelf an Husbandman,
And wicked too! believe't that can.

What you are, godly or wicked is not for me (that am a ſtranger to moſt of you) to determine; but if you are no godly, its my deſire and deſign to make you ſo; and I could not think on a more probable means to accompliſh this honeſt deſign, than what I have here uſed. Methinks it ſhould be a pleaſure to you, when you come weary out of the fields from Plow, or any other labour, to ſit down in the evening, and read that Chapter which concerns that particular buſineſs, and refreſh *your* ſouls *even from that which hath* wearied *your* bodies. *Where your hearts but heavenly, and more time allowed for ſpiritual Husbandry, your inward comforts would be much more, and your outward gains not a jot leſs; for if the ſucceſs of all your civil labours and imployments depend upon the pleaſure and will of God; (as all that are not Atheiſts do acknowledge) then certainly, your buſineſs can ſucceed never the worſe, for your endeavours to pleaſe him, upon whoſe pleaſure it ſo intirely depends. I have many times lifted up my heart to heaven, whilſt theſe papers were under my hand*

hand, for a special blessing to accompany them, when they should be in yours. If the Lord accomplish my desires by them upon your souls, you shall enjoy two heavens, one here, and another hereafter. Would not that be sweet? The Historian *tells us, that* Altitius Serarius *was sowing Corn in the field, when* Q. Cincinnatus *came to him bare headed, with letters from the* Senate, *signifying that he was chosen to the* Dictatorship. *I hope the Lord will so bless and succeed these labours, that many of you will be called from holding the* Plow *on earth, to wear the* Crown *of glory in heaven; which is the sincere desire*

Of

Your hearty Well-wisher.

JOHN FLAVELL.

John Craig July 14 1793

THE

Author to the Reader

COme you whoſe liſtning ears do even itch,
To hear the way preſcrib'd of growing rich;
I'le ſhew you how to make your Tenements
Ten thouſand times more worth, and yet your rents
Not rais'd a farthing; here my Reader ſees,
A way to make his dead and barren Trees;
Yield precious fruit, his Sheep though n're ſo bad
Bear golden fleeces, ſuch ne're *Jaſon* had.
In every thing your gain ſhall more than double,
And all this had with far leſs toyl and trouble.
Methinks, I hear thee ſay this cannot be,
I'le ne're believe it: well, read on and ſee.
Reader, hadſt thou but ſenſes exercis'd
To judge aright; were ſpiritual things but priz'd
At their juſt value, thou wouldſt quickly ſay
'Tis ſo indeed; thou wouldſt not go thy way
Like one that's diſappointed, and ſo fling
The Book aſide, *I thought 'twas ſome ſuch thing.*
Time was when Country Chriſtians did afford,
More hours and pains about God's holy Word;
Witneſs the man who did moſt gladly pay
For ſome few leaves his whole Cart load of Hay.
And time ſhall be when heavenly truth that warms
The heart ſhall be preferr'd before your Farms.
When HOLINESS as ſacred Scripture tells,
Shall be engraven on the Horſes bells.
Lord haſten on thoſe much deſired times;
And to that purpoſe bleſs theſe rural Rimes.

THE PROEM.

1 COR. 3. 9.

Ye are God's Husbandry.

THE ſcope and deſign of the following Chapters, being the ſpiritual improvement of Husbandry, it will be neceſſary by way of *Proem*, to acquaint the Reader with the Foundation and general Rules of this Art in the Scriptures, thereby to procure greater reſpect unto, and prevent prejudice againſt compoſures of this kind.

To this end I ſhall entertain the Reader a little while upon what this Scripture affords us, which will give a fair Introduction to the following Diſcourſe.

The Apoſtle's ſcope in the context being to check and repreſs the vain glory and emulation of the *Corinthians*, who inſtead of thankfulneſs for, and an humble and diligent improvement of the excellent bleſſings of the Miniſtry; turn'd all into vain oſtentation and emulation, one preferring *Paul*, and another *Apollos*, in the mean time depriving themſelves

of the choice bleſſings they might have received from them both.

To cure this growing miſchief in the Churches, he checks their vanity, and diſcovers the evil of ſuch practiſes; by ſeveral Arguments, amongſt which this is one.

Ye are God's Husbandry. q. d.

What are ye, but a field, or plot of ground, to be manured and cultivated for God? and what are *Paul*, *Apollo*, and *Cephas*, but ſo many work-men and labourers, imployed by God, the great Husbandman, to plant and water you all?

If then, you ſhall glory in ſome, and deſpiſe others, you take the ready way to deprive your ſelves of the benefits and mercies you might receive from the joint Miniſtry of them all. God hath uſed me to plant you, and *Apollo* to water you; you are obliged to bleſs him for the Miniſtry of both, and it will be your ſin if you deſpiſe either. If the work-men be diſcouraged in their labours, 'tis the field that loſes and ſuffers by it; ſo that the words are a ſimilitude, ſerving to illuſtrate the Relation.

1. Which the Churches have to God.
2. Which God's Miniſters have to the Churches.

1. The relation betwixt God and them, is like that of an Husbandman to his ground or tillage. The Greek word ſignifies Gods * *Arable*, or that plot of ground which God manures by the miniſtry of Paſtors and Teachers.

* *Fideles vocantur dei γεωργιον, quia a Deo per paſtores, tanquam arvum excoluntur.* Rav. 2.

2. It ſerves to illuſtrate the relation that the Miniſters of Chriſt ſuſtain to the Churches, which is like that of the Husbands ſervants to him, and his fields; which excellent notion carries in it the perpetual neceſſity of a Goſpel-Miniſtry. (For what fruit can be expected, where there are none to till the ground?) As alſo the diligence, accountableneſs, and rewards, which theſe labourers are to give to, and receive from God, the great Husbandman. All runs into this,

That the life and imployment of an Husbandman, excellently ſhadows forth the relation betwixt God and his Church, and the relative duties betwixt its Miniſters and members.

Or more briefly thus.

The

The Church is God's Husbandry, about which his Miniſters are imployed.

I ſhall not here obſerve my uſual Method, (intending no more but a Preface to the following Diſcourſe) but only open the particulars wherein the reſemblance conſiſts; and then draw ſome Corrolaries from the whole. The firſt I ſhall diſpatch in theſe twenty particulars following.

1. *Prop.* The Husbandman purchaſes his fields, and gives a valuable conſideration for them, *Jer.* 32.9.10.

Reddit. So hath God purchaſed his Church with a full valuable price, even the precious blood of his own Son, *Act.* 20. 28. *Feed the Church of God, which he hath purchaſed, or acquired with his own blood.* O dear-bought inheritance, how much doth this beſpeak its worth? or rather, the high eſteem God hath of it; to pay down blood, and ſuch blood for it; never was any inheritance bought at ſuch a rate: every particular elect perſon, and none but ſuch as are comprehended in this purchaſe, the reſt ſtill remain in the devils right. Sin made a forfeiture of all to juſtice, upon which Satan entred and took poſſeſſion, and as a ſtrong man armed, ſtill keeps it in them, *Luke* 11.21. but upon payment of this ſum to juſtice, the Elect (who only are intended in this purchaſe) paſs over into God's right and propriety, and now are neither Satans, *Acts* 26.18. nor their own, 1 *Cor.* 6.19. but the *Lord's peculiar.* 1 *Pet.*2.6. And to ſhew how much they are his own, you have two *poſſeſſives* in one verſe, *Cant.* 8. 12. *My vineyard, which is mine is before me. Mine, which is mine.*

2. *Prop.* Husbandman divide and ſeparate their own Lands from other mens, they have their Land-marks and boundaries, by which propriety is preſerved, *Deut.* 27.17. *Prov.*22.28.

Reddit. So are the people of God wonderfully ſeparated, and diſtinguiſht from all the people of the earth, *Pſal.* 4.3. *The Lord hath ſet apart him that is godly for himſelf, and the Lord knoweth who are his,* 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. It is a ſpecial act of grace, to be incloſed by God out of the waſte howling wilderneſs of the world, *Deut.* 33. 16. This God did *intentionally*, in the decree before the world was; which decree is executed in their ſanctification and adoption.

3. *Prop.* Corn fields are carefully fenced by the Husbandman with hedges and ditches, to preserve their fruits from beasts that would otherwise over-run and destroy them—— *Non minus est virtus quam quærere parta tueri.* It is as good Husbandry to keep what we have, as to acquire more than we had.

Reddit. *My well-beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill, and he fenced it*, Isa. 5. 1, 2. No inheritance is better defended and secured, than the Lords inheritance, *Psal.* 125. 2. *As the mountains are round about* Jerusalem, *so the Lord is round about his people.* So careful is he for their safety, *that he createth upon every dwelling place of mount* Sion, *and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory shall be a defence*, Isa. 4. 5. Not a particular Saint, but is hedged about and inclosed in arms of power and love. *Job.* 1. 10. *Thou hast made a hedge about him.* The Devil fain would, but by his own confession could not, break over that hedge to touch *Job.* til' Gods permission made a gap for him: Yea, he not only makes an hedge, but a wall about them, and that of fire, *Zech.* 2. 5. *Sets a guard of Angels to encamp round about them that fear him*, *Psal.* 34. 7. and will not trust them with a single guard of Angels neither, though their power be great, and love to the Saints as great; but watches over them himself also, *Isa* 27. 2, 3. *Sing ye unto her, a vineyard of red wine, I the Lord do keep it, I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.*

4. *Prop.* Husbandmen carry out their Compost; to fertilize their arable ground, they dung it, dress it, and keep it in heart; and in these Western parts are at great charges to bring lime, and salt water sand to quicken their thin and cold soyl.

Reddit. *Lord, let it alone this year also till I shall dig about it and dung it; and if it bear fruit well, if not, cut it down*, Luke 13. 8. O the rich dressing which God bestows upon his Churches! they are costly fields indeed, dress and fertilized, not only by precious Ordinances and Providences, but also by the sweat, yea, bloud of the dispensers of them. "You *Londoners* (saith "Mr. *Lockier*) are trees watered choicely indeed; 'tis sto-"ried of the Palm-tree, that at its first transplanting into "*Italy*, 'twas watered with wine, I cannot say (saith he) that

Lockier in Co. lect. p. 552.

you

"you have been ſo watered by me, I dare not; but this I can "humbly and truly ſay, that if our choiceſt ſtrength and "ſpirits may be named inſtead of water, wine; or if the "bleſſing which hath gone along with theſe waters, at any "time, hath turned them into wine, in vigour upon your "ſouls; then hath God by me, watered your roots with "wine.

5. *Prop.* The Husbandman builds his houſe, where he makes his purchaſe, dwells upon his Land, and frequently viſits it; he knows, that ſuch as dwell far from their *Lands*, are not far from *loſs*.

Reddit. So doth God; where-eaer he plants a Church there doth he fix his habitation, intending there to dwell, *Pſa.* 46. 5. *God is in the midſt of her*, ſhe ſhall not be moved. Thus God came to dwell upon his own Fee and Inheritance, in *Judea Levit.*26.11,12. *And I will ſet my tabernacle amongſt you; and will be your God, and ye ſhall be my people.* Which promiſe is again renew'd to his Churches of the New Teſtament, 2 *Cor.* 6. 16. And when the Churches ſhall be in their greateſt flouriſh, and purity, then ſhall there be the fulleſt and moſt glorious manifeſtation of the divine preſence among them, *Rev.*21.3. *And I heard a great voice out of heaven, ſaying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and be their God.* Hence the Aſſemblies are called, the places of his feet——And there they *behold the beauty of the Lord, Pſal.*27.

6. *Prop.* Husbandmen grudge not at the coſt they are at for their tillage; but as they lay out vaſt ſums upon it, ſo, they do it cheerfully.

Redpit. *And now, O inhabitants of* Jeruſalem, *and men of* Juda, *judge I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard; what could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?* And as he beſtows upon his heritage, the choiceſt mercies, ſo he doth it with the greateſt cheerfulneſs; for he ſaith, *Jer.*32. 41. *I will rejoyce over them, to do them good; and I will plant them in this Land aſſuredly, with my whole heart and with my whole ſoul.* It is not the giving out of mercy (ſaith one) that grieveth God, but the recoiling of his mercies back

again

again upon him by the creatures ingratitude.

7. Prop. When Husbandmen have been at coſt and pains about their Husbandry, they expect fruit from it, anſwerable to their pains and expences about it: *Behold* (ſaith *James*, *the Husbandman waiteth for the precious fruits of the earth*, Jam. 5 7.

Reddit. *And he looked that it ſhould bring forth fruit*, Iſa. 5.2. This heavenly Husbandman waits for the fruits of his fields alſo; never did any Husbandman long for the deſired Harveſt, more than God doth for the fruits of holineſs from his Saints; great are the expectations of God from his people: *And when the time of the fruit drew near, he ſent his ſervants to the Husbandmen, that they might receive the fruit of it.*

8. Prop. Husbandman are much delighted, to ſee the ſucceſs of their labours, it comforts them over all their hard pains, and many weary dayes, to ſee a good increaſe.

Reddit. Much more is God delighted, in beholding the flouriſhing graces of his people; it pleaſes him to ſee his plants laden with fruit, and his valleys ſing with corn, *Cant.* 6.2. *My beloved is gone down into his garden, into his beds of ſpices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilleys.* Theſe beds of ſpices (ſay Expoſitors) are the particular Churches, the companies of Believers; he goes to feed in theſe gardens, like as men go to their gardens to make merry, or to gather fruit; *Cant.* 4. 16. *He eats his pleaſant fruit*, viz. His peoples holy performances, ſweeter to him than any *Ambroſia*; thus he feeds in the gardens, and he gathers lillies when he tranſlates good ſouls into his Kingdom above; *For the Lord taketh pleaſure in his Saints, and will beautifie the meek with ſalvation.*

Paſcitur Chriſtus quando ſuorum virtutes videt, lilia decerpit, quando ultimam quemque ex hac vita traducit. Trap. in loc.

9. Prop. The Husbandman is exceedingly grieved, when he ſees the hopes of a good crop diſappointed, and his fields prove barren, or blaſted.

Reddit. So the Lord expreſſes his grief for, and anger againſt his people, when they bring forth no fruits, or wilde fruits, worſe than none, *Hoſ.* 9.16. *Ephraim is ſmitten, their root is dryed up.* Chriſt was exceedingly diſpleaſed with the fig-tree, and curſed it for its barrenneſs; it grieves him to the heart when his ſervants return to him with ſuch complaints as theſe, *We have laboured in vain, we have ſpent our ſtrength for nought.* Husband-

Mal. 49. 4

Husbandmen imploy many labourers to work in their fields, there is need of many hands for such a multiplicity of buſineſs. 10. *Prop.*

God hath diverſity of workmen alſo in the Churches, whom he ſends forth to labour in his ſpiritual fields, *Eph.* 4. 12. *He gave ſome Apoſtles, ſome Prophets, and ſome Evangeliſts; and ſome Paſtors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints for the work of the Miniſtry.* *Amos* 3. 7. I have ſent [*my ſervants*] *the Prophets.* 'Tis uſual with the Apoſtles to place this title of ſervant among their honourary titles, though a prophane mouth once called it, *Proboſum artificium*, a ſordid artifice. Chriſt hath ſtampt a great deal of dignity upon his Miniſters, in retaining them for the nearest ſervice to himſelf, 1 *Cor.* 4. 1. *Let a man ſo account of us, as the Miniſters of Chriſt*; they are workers together with God: the Husbandman works in the field among his labourers, and the great God diſdaineth not to work in and with his poor ſervants in the work of the Miniſtry. *Reddit.*

The work about which Husbandmen imploy their ſervants in the field, is toylſom and ſpending. You ſee they come home at night as weary as they can draw their legs after them. 11. *Prop.*

But Gods workmen have a much harder task than they. Hence they are ſet forth in Scripture by the laborious ox, 1 *Cor.* 9 9. *Rev.* 4 7. Some derive the word * Deacon from a word that ſignifies duſt, to ſhew the laborioufneſs of their imployment, labouring till even choaked with duſt and ſweat. 'Tis ſaid of *Epaphroditus*, *Phil.* 2. 13. *That for the work of Chriſt he was ſick, and nigh unto death; not regarding his life to ſupply the lack of ſervice.* The Apoſtles expreſſion, *Col.* 1. *ult.* is very emphatical, *Whereunto I alſo labour, ſtriving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.* The word ſignifies, ſuch ſpending labour as puts a man into an agony; and bleſſed is that ſervant, whom his Lord when he cometh ſhall find ſo doing. *Reddit.* * Διάκονος, ἀ κόνις. Ἀγωνιζόμενος.

The immediate end of the Husbandmans labour, and his ſervants labour, is for the improvement of his Land, to make it more flouriſhing and fruitful. 12. *Prop.*

The

Reddit. The ſcope and end of the Miniſtry is for the Churches benefit and advantage. They muſt not lord it over God's heritage, as if the Church were for them, and not they for the Church; nor ſerve themſelves of it, but be the Churches ſervants for Jeſus ſake, 2 *Cor.*4.6. the power they have received being for edification, and not for deſtruction, 2 *Cor.*10.8. Chriſt have given them to the Churches, their gifts, their time, their ſtrength, and all their Miniſterial talents are not their own, but the Churches ſtock and treaſure.

13. *Prop.* The workmen that labour in the fields, are accountable for their work to him that imploy'd them.

Reddit. Church-Officers are alſo accountable to God for all the ſouls committed to them. They are Stewards of thy Myſteries of God, 1 *Cor.*4.1. and Stewards are accountable. *We watch for your ſouls* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *as thoy that muſt give an account*, *Heb.* 13.7. If theſe ſervants be unfaithful in their work and truſt, the blood of ſouls ſhall be required at their hands, *Ezek.*3.17,18. which are *fulmina*, *non verba* (ſaith *Eraſmus*) thunder-bolts, rather than words. The guilt of blood is the greateſt guilt; and of all blood, the blood of ſouls.

14. *Prop.* Thoſe that ſpend their time and ſtrength all their dayes, in manuring, and plowing the fields, do maintain themſelves and their families by their labours; their hands are ſufficient for themſelves and theirs.

Reddit. *Even ſo hath God ordained, that they which preach the Goſpel, ſhould live of the Goſpel*, 1 Cor.19 14. *The workman is worthy of his meat*, Mat.10.10. 'Tis a ſad thing, if thoſe who break the bread of life to ſouls, ſhould be ſuffered to want bread themſelves. God would not have the mouth of the ox muzled that treads out the corn, but have liberty to eat, as well as work: Yet, if any pretender to the Miniſtry be like the heifer that loves to tread out the corn, (*i. e.*) cares to do no work, but ſuch as brings in preſent pay; he therein ſufficiently diſcovers his beaſt-like diſpoſition. Miniſters muſt be faithful in their Maſters work, and if men do not, God will reward them. For, *He is not unrighteous to forget their work, and labour of love*, *Heb.*6.10.

I

15. *Prop.* It is a great trouble to Husbandmen in a busie time, to be put off from their labours by stormy weather, which drives them out of the fields, and makes them let all lye, till it cleer up again; yet, meanwhile, they are not idle, but imploy themselves in home work.

Reddit. Even so in God's Husbandry, 'tis an unspeakable affliction to God's workmen to be rendred useless and unserviceable to the Churches, by those storms of trouble, which drive them from their publick Ministerial work. With what a heavy heart did *Paul* go off from his work at *Ephesus*, Act. 20 It spends a Minister to preach, but more to be silent. 'Tis a loud speaking judgment, when God shall say to them as to *Ezekiel*, *Son of man, I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, and thou shalt be dumb*, Ezek. 3. 26. Such silencing providences. speaking thundring language to gracious hearts; yet even then, the keepers of the vineyard have a private vineyard of their own to look after, they have much home work when no out-work.

16. *Prop.* There is a vast difference betwixt those fields which have been well husbanded, and drest by a skilful and diligennt Husbandman; and those that have been long out of husbandry. How fragant is the one! how dry and barren the other? When you pass by a field well dressed and fenced, every thing prosperous and in exquisite order, you may know without farther enquiry, that a good Husband lives there.

Reddit. Thus stands the case betwixt those places which God hath blest with a faithful painful Ministry, and such as have none, or worse than none: For as the Husbandmans cost and pains appears in the verdant, and fragrant hew of his fields; so a Ministers pains and diligence is (ordinarily) seen in the heavenly lives, and flourishing graces of the people. The Churches of *Corinth* and *Thessalonica*, where *Paul* and other holy instruments spent much of their time and pains became famous and flourishing Churches, 2 *Cor.* 9. 2. A special blessing comes along with a godly Minister, to the place where special providence assigns him. Such places like *Gideon's* fleece, have the dew of heaven lying on them, whiles others round about are dry and barren.

17. *Prop.* The Husbandman is not discouraged, though the seed lye long under the clods, he knows it will spring up at last, and reward him, or those that come after him, for their pains and patience in waiting for it.

Reddit. Ministers should not be presently discouraged in their work, because they see but little or no appearance, of all the seed they have sown among the people. *The servant of the Lord must be patient towards all, waiting if at any time God will give them repentance*, 2 *Tim.* 24. 25. And if it never spring up in his time, it may after his death; and if so, he shall not fail of his reward, *Joh.* 4. 36, 37. *And he that reapeth, receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal, that both he that soweth, and he that reapeth may rejoyce together; and herein is that saying true, one soweth, and another reapeth.* Though Ministers dye, yet their words live; yea, their words take hold of men when they are in the dust, *Zech* 1.6.

18. *Prop.* Husbandmen find low ground and valleys, most fertile. Hills, how loftily soever, they over-top the lower grounds, yet answer not the Husbandmans pains, as the valleys do. These are best watered and secured from the scorching heat of the Sun.

Reddit. Experience shews us, that the humblest Saints are most fruitful under the Gospel. *These are they that receive with meekness the ingraffed word*, Jam. 1. 21. whose influences abide in them, as the rain doth in the low valleys. Happy is that Minister, whose lot falls in such a pleasant valley. *Blessed are they that sow beside all such waters, that send for thither the feet of the ox and the ass*, Isa.32.20. Among these valleys run the pleasant springs, and purling brooks, which fertilize the neighbouring ground. Heavenly Ordinances there, leave fruitful influences.

19. *Prop.* The first Crop is usually the best; and the longer the Husbandman tills his ground, the less it produces. After a few years its vigour and strength is spent.

Reddit. The first entertainment of the Gospel is commonly the best; and what good is done by the Ministry, is often done at its first entrance. New things are pretty, and very taking. *John at first was to the Jews a burning and a shining light, and*

they

they were willing [*for a ſeaſon*] *to rejoyce in his light*, Joh. 5. 35. *Paul* was highly valued among the *Galatians* at firſt; ſuch was their zeal, that they could have pluckt out their eyes and have given them to him; but how quickly did this full tide ebb again? for he complains, *Gal.* 4. 15. *Where then is the bleſſedneſs ye ſpake of?*

Laſtly, When fields prove barren, and will not quit the Husbandmans coſt, nor anſwer the ſeed he ſows in them, he plucks up the hedges, and layes it waſte. 20. *Prop.*

So when Churches grow formal and fruitleſs, the Lord removes his Goſpel-preſence from them; plucks up the hedge of his protection from about them, and layes them open, as waſte ground, to be over-run by their enemies, *Jer.* 7. 12. *Go to* Shiloh, *and ſee what I did unto it.* What is become of thoſe once famous and flouriſhing Churches of *Aſia*? Are they not laid waſte, and trodden down by infidels? And now go to (ſaith the great Husbandman) *I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard; I will pull up the hedge thereof, and it ſhall be laid waſte*, Iſa. 5. 5. *Reddit.*

Thus you ſee the Allegory opened in its particulars: from the whole; I ſhall preſent you with theſe five enſuing *Corrolaries.*

The Firſt Corrolary. 1. *Corrolary.*

How great then are the dignities and priviledges of the Churches of Jeſus Chriſt, whom he hath appropriated to himſelf, above all the people of the earth, to be his peculiar inheritance? The reſt of the world is a waſte wilderneſs; all other places, how pleaſant ſoever, in reſpect of their natural amænity and delights, are truly enough called, the dark places of the earth; diſmal, ſolitary cells, where *Ziim* and *Iim*, *Bitterns*, *Cormorants*, and every doleful creature dwells. But the Church is the Paradiſe of the earth, *a garden incloſed*, Cant. 4. 12. in whoſe hedges the Goſpel-birds chirp and ſing melodiouſly, *Cant.* 2. 12. Its beds, are beds of ſpices, *Cant.* 6. 2. and betwixt its pleaſant banks, a Chriſtal River of living water runs, *Rev.* 22. 1. the ſtreams whereof make glad the City of God;

in the midst thereof the Lord himself delights to walk. O *Sion!* with what pleasures dost thou abound! If *Bernard* were so ravished with the delights of his *Monastery*, because of its green banks, and shady bowers, and herbs, and trees, and various objects to feed his eyes, and fragrant smells, and sweet and various tunes of birds, together with the opportunities of devout contemplation, that he cryed out admiringly, *Lord! what delights dost thou provide, even for the poor!* How much more should we be ravished with *Sion's* glory? for *beautiful for situation, is mount Zion.* Of whom it may much more truly be said, what a Chronickler of our own once said of *England*, that it is the fortunate Island the Paradice of Pleasure, the Garden of God, whose valleys are like *Eden*, whose hills are as *Lebanon*, whose springs are as *Pisgah*, whose Rivers are as *Jordan*, whose wall is the *Ocean*, and whose defence is the Lord *Jehovah*. Happy art thou, O *Israel*, who is like unto thee? Who can count the priviledges wherewith Christ hath invested his Churches? O let it never seem a light thing in our eyes, that we grow within his blessed inclosure. How sweet a promise is that, *Exod.* 19.5. *Ye shall be to me a peculiar treasure above all people; for all the earth is mine.*

Speeds Chron.

The Second Corrolary.

Hence it follows, That spiritual barrenness is a great reproach and shame to Christians, Shall God's Husbandry, which is so planted, watered, fenced, filled with favours and mercies, be like the barren heath in the desert? Surely it should be said of every soul that grows here, as the *Historian* saith of *Spain*, that there is *nihil infructuosum, nihil sterile*; nothing barren or unfruitful in it. God's vineyard is planted in a very fruitful hill, *Isa.* 5. 1. *And surely they that are planted in the house of the Lord, should flourish in the Court of our God; they should bring forth fruit, even in old age, to shew that God is upright*, Psal. 92. 13, 14. *They are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath ordained they should walk in*, Eph. 2.10. *They are married unto Christ, that they might bring*

bring forth fruit to God, Rom.7.4. An empty branch is a disshonour to the root that bears it, a barren field to the Husbandman that owns it; God cannot endure that in his fields, which he suffers in the wilderness.

The Third Corrolary,

If the Church be God's Husbandry, then there is such a special gracious presence of the Lord in his Churches, as is not to be found in all the world beside. Where may you expect to find the Husbandman, but in his own fields? there lyes his business, and there he delights to be. And where may we expect to find God, but in the Assemblies of his Saints? *He walks amongst the golden Candlesticks*. Rev. 2.1. I will walk among you (saith he) and be your God, 2 *Cor* 6. 16. Upon this account the Church is called *Jehovah Shamah*; the Lord is there, *Ezek*. 48. *ult*. You may see the *footsteps* of God in the *creatures*; but the *face* of God is only to be seen in his *Ordinances*. Hence *Psal*. 27. 4. *David long'd for the Temple, that he might see the beauty of the Lord*. Now, what is beauty, but a symetry and proportion of parts? In the works of *Creation*, you see one attribute manifested in one thing, and another, in another thing; but in the *Sanctuary* you may see beauty, even in all the attributes of God displayed there: And indeed, we find in Scripture such astonishing expressions about the visions of God in his Church, that in reading them, a man can see little difference betwixt it and heaven; for as the Church is called heaven, *Mat*.25.1. so its description is like that of heaven, *Heb*. 12.22, 23. *You are come to the heavenly* Jerusalem, *and to an innumerable company of Angels*, &c. And *Rev*.4.22. *They shall see his face, and his name shall be written in their foreheads*. And *v*.24. *The Saints are represented, standing nearer to the throne of God, than the Angels themselves*. Hence also Ordinances are called *Galleries*, in which both Saints and Angels walk, beholding the glory of him that sits upon the throne, *Zech* 3.7. *If you will keep my wayes, I will give you Galleries to walk in, among them that stand by*.

The Fourth Corrolary.

If the Church be God's Husbandry, then thoſe that be imployed in Miniſterial work, ought to be men of great judgment and experience in ſoul affairs; for theſe are the labourers whom God, the myſtical Husbandman imploys and entruſts about his ſpiritual Husbandry. Should Husbandmen imploy ignorant perſons, that neither underſtand the rules, nor proper ſeaſons of Husbandry; how much would ſuch workmen damnifie and prejudice him? he will not imploy ſuch to weed his fields, as know not wheat from tares; or to prune his trees, that think *Midſummer* as fit for that work as *December*; muchleſs will God. He qualifies all that he ſends, with wiſdom for their work. *His workmen approve themſelves workmen indeed, ſuch as need not be aſhamed, rightly dividing the word of truth*, 2 Tim. 2. 15. As *Bezaleel* was furniſhed with wiſdom, before he was imployed in Tabernacle-work, ſo Chriſt inſtructs his ſervants, with skill and inſight, before they are imployed in Miniſterial-work. He gives them a mouth and wiſdom, *Luke* 21. 15. indues them with power from on high: as Chriſt was filled abundantly with the Spirit for his work, ſo according to proportion, are thoſe that are ſent by him, *Joh.* 20. 21, 22. *As my Father hath ſent me, ſo ſend I you.* And as for thoſe that run before they are ſent, and underſtand not the Myſteries of the Goſpel, I ſhall ſay no more of them, but this; *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*

The Fifth Corrolary.

To conclude, If the Church be God's Husbandry, that is, if Husbandry have ſo many reſemblances of Gods works about the Church in it; then how inexcuſable is the ignorance of Husbandmen, in the things of God, who beſides the word of the Goſpel, have the teachings of the Creatures; and can hardly turn their hands to any part of their work, but the Spirit hints one ſpiritual uſe or other from it to their ſouls?

ſouls? How do the Scriptures abound with Parables, and lively ſimilitudes taken from Husbandry? from the field, the ſeed, the plow, the barn, from threſhing and winnowing; ſimilitudes alſo from planting, graffing, and pruning of trees; and not a few from the ordering of Cattel. So that, to what buſineſs ſo ever you turn your hands, in any part of your calling, ſtill God meets you, with one heavenly inſtruction or other. But alas! How few are able to improve their civil imployments to ſuch excellent ends? Theſe things are but briefly hinted in the Scriptures, and thoſe hints ſcattered up and down, that they know not where to find them; and if they could, yet would it be difficult ſo to methodize them, as it is neceſſary they ſhould be, in order to their due improvement, by Meditation.

And therefore I judged it neceſſary to collect and prepare them for your uſe; and in this manner to preſent them to you, as you find them in the following Chapters. Read, conſider, and apply; and the Lord make you good Husbands for your own ſouls.

THE

THE FIRST PART OF HUSBANDRY Spiritualized.

CHAP. I.

In the laborious Husbandman you see,
What all true Christians are, or ought to be.

Upon the industry of the Husbandman.

OBSERVATION.

THE imployment of the Husbandman is by all acknowledged, to be very laborious; there is a multiplicity of busines incumbent on him. The end of one work, is but the begining of another. Every season of the year brings its proper work with it: Sometimes you find him in his *Fields*, dressing, plowing, sowing, harrowing, weeding, or reaping; and sometimes in his *Barn*, threshing, or winnowing; some-

t mes in his *Orchard*, planting, graffing, or pruning his trees; and ſometimes among his *Cattel*: ſo that he hath no time to be idle. And as he hath a multiplicity of buſineſs, ſo every part of it is full of toyl, and ſpending labour: He eats not the bread of idleneſs, but earns it before he eats it; and as it were, dips it in his own ſweat, whereby it becomes the ſweeter to him. Though ſin brought in the Husbandmans ſweat, *Gen.*3.19. yet now not to ſweat would increaſe his ſin, *Ezek.* 16. 49.

APPLICATION.

BEhold here the life of a ſerious Chriſtian, ſhadowed forth to the life. As the life of a Husbandman, ſo the life of a Chriſtian is no idle, or eaſie life. They that take up Religion for *oſtentation*, and not for an *occupation*; and thoſe that place the buſineſs of it in notions, and idle ſpeculations, in forms, geſtures and external obſervances, may think, and call it ſo: but ſuch as devote themſelves unto it, and make Religion their buſineſs, will find it no eaſie work, to exerciſe themſelves to godlineſs. Many there are, that affect the reputation and *ſweet* of it, who cannot endure the labour, and *ſweat* of it. If men might be indulged to divide their hearts betwixt God and the World, or to cull out the cheap and eaſie duties of it, and neglect the more difficult and coſtly ones, it were an eaſie thing to be a Chriſtian: but ſurely to have reſpect to all God's commandments, to live the life, as well as ſpeak, the language of a Chriſtian; to be holy in all manner of converſation, is not ſo eaſie. This will be evident, by comparing the life of a Chriſtian, with the life of a Husbandman, in theſe five particulars: Wherein it will appear that the work of a Chriſtian, is by much the hardeſt work of the two.

1. The Husbandman hath much to do, many things to look after; but the Chriſtian more: If we reſpect the extenſiveneſs of his work, he hath a large field indeed to labourn in, *Pſal.*119. 96. *The commandment is exceeding broad*; of a vaſt extent and latitude, comprizing not only a multitude of external

ternal acts, and duties, and guiding the Offices of the outward man about them, but also taking in every thought and motion of the inner man within its compass.

You find in the Word, a world of work cut out for Christians; there's hearing work, praying work reading, meditating, and self-examining work; it puts him also upon a constant watch over all the corruptions of his heart. Oh, what a world of work hath a Christian about them? For of them he may say, as the *Historian* doth of *Hannibal* They are never quiet, whether conquering, or conquered. How many week languishing graces hath he to recover, improve, and strengthen? There is a weak faith, a languishing love, dull and faint desires to be quickned, and invigorated. And when all this is done, what a multitude of work do his several relations exact from him? he hath a world of business incumbent on him, as a parent, child, husband, wife, master, servant, or friend; yea, not only to friends, but enemies. And beside all this, how many difficult things are there to be born and suffered for Christ? and yet will not God allow his people in the neglect of any one of them: neither can he be a Christian that hath not respect to every command, and is not holy, in all manner of conversation, *Psal.* 119. 6. 2. *Pet.* 3. 11. every one of these duties, like the several spokes in a wheel come to bear in the whole round of a Christians conversation: so that he hath more work upon his hands than the Husbandman.

The Husbandman's work is confessed to be Spending work, but not like the Christans. What *Augustus* said of the young *Roman*, is verified in the true Christian, *Quicquid vult valde vult.* Whatsoever he doth in Religion, he doth to purpose. Under the Law, God rejected the *Snail* and the *Ass*, Levit. 11. 30. *Exod.* 13. 13. And under the Gospel, he allows no sluggish lazy Professor, 1 *Tim.* 5. 11, 13. Sleepy duties are utterly unsuitable to the living God; he will have the very spirits distilled and offered up to him in every duty, *Joh.* 4. 24. he bestows upon his people, the very substance and kernel of mercies, and will not accept from them the shells and shadows of duties; not the skin,

2.

but the inwards, and the fat that covereth the inwards, was required under the Law, *Exod.* 2930. And every ſacrifice under the Goſpel, muſt be *ſacrificium medullatum*, a ſacrifice full of marrow; obſerve the manner in which their work is to be performed.

Rom. 12.11. in ſerving God, fervent in ſpirit, or hiſſing hot.

2 *Pet.* 1. 10. in ſecuring ſalvation, diligent; or doing it throughly, and enough.

1 *Tim.* 4.7. in godlineſs, exerciſing, or ſtripping themſelves; as for a race.

Luke 13.24. in the purſuit of happineſs, ſtriving, even to an agony.

Act. 26.7. in prayer, ſerving God inſtantly; or in a ſtretched-out manner; yea, pouring out their hearts before him, *Pſal.* 62.8. as if the body were left like a dead corps upon the knees, whilſt the ſpirit is departed from it, and aſcended to God. This is the manner of his work: judge then how much harder this work is, than to ſpend the ſweat of the brow in manual labour.

3. The Husbandman finds his work as he left it, he can begin one day, where he left the other; but it is not ſo with the Chriſtian, a bad heart, and a buſie devil, diſorder and ſpoyl his work every day. The Chriſtian finds not his heart in the morning, as he left it at night; and even when he is about his work, how many ſet-backs doth he meet with? Satan ſtands at his right hand (the working hand) to reſiſt him, *Zech.* 3.1. when he would do good, evil (the evil of his own heart and nature) is preſent with him.

4. The Husbandman hath ſome reſting dayes, when he throws aſide all his work, and takes his recreation; but the Chriſtian hath no reſting day, till his dying day; and then he ſhall reſt from his labours. Religion allows no idle dayes, *but requires him to be alwayes abounding in the work of the Lord*, 1 *Cor.* 15.58. When one duty is done, another calls for him; the Lord's day is a day of reſt to the Husbandman; but no day in the week ſo laborious to the Chriſtian. O 'tis a ſpending day to him. When he hath gathered in the crop of

on

one duty; he is not to sit down satisfied therewith, or say as that rich worldling did, *Luke* 12. 19. *Soul take thine ease, thou hast goods laid up for many years*, but must to plow again, and count it well if the Vintage reach to the seed-time, *Lev.* 26.5. I mean, if the strength, influence, and comforts of one duty, hold out to another duty; and that it may be so, and there be no room left for idleness, God hath appointed ejaculatory prayer, to fill up the intervals, betwixt stated and the more solemn duties. These are to keep in the fire, which kindled the morning sacrifice, to kindle the evening sacrifice. When can the Christian sit down and say, now all my work is ended, I have nothing to do, without doors, or within?

Lastly, There is a time when the labour of the Husbandman is ended; old age and weakness takes him off from all imployment; they can only look upon their labourers, but cannot do a stroke of work themselves; they can tell you what they did in their younger years, but now (say they) we must leave it to younger people: we cannot be young always, but the Christian is never super-annuated as to the work of Religion; yea, the longer he lives, the more his Master expects from him. When he is full of dayes, God expects he should be full of fruits, *Psal.* 9. 14. *They shall bring forth fruit in old age, they shall be fat and flourishing.*

REFLECTIONS.

1. The worldlings Reflection.

HOw hard have I laboured for the meat that perisheth? prevented the dawning of the day, and laboured as in the very fire, and yet is the Christians work harder than mine? Surely then, I never yet understood the work of Christianity. Alas! my sleepy prayers, and formal duties, even all that ever I performed in my life, never cost me that pains that one hour at plow hath done. I have either wholly neglected, or at best, so lazily performed religious duties, that I may truly say, I offer to God what cost me nothing. Wo is me poor wretch! How is the judgment of *Corah* spiritually executed upon me? The earth opened her mouth, and swallowed

lowed up his body; but it hath opened its mouth and ſwallowed up my heart, my time, and all my affections. How far am I from the Kingdom of God!

2. The Formaliſts Reflection.

And how little better is my caſe, who have indeed profeſſed Religion, but never made it my buſineſs? Will an empty (though ſplendid) profeſſion ſave me? How many brave Ships have periſhed in the ſtorms, notwithſtanding their fine names, the *proſperous*, the *ſucceſs*, the *happy return*? A fine name could not protect them from the rocks, nor will it ſave me from hell. I have done by Religion, as I ſhould have done by the world; prayed, as if I prayed not; and heard as if I heard not. I have given to God but the ſhadow of duty, and can never expect from him a real reward.

3. The Reflection of a ſlothful Chriſtian.

How unlike a Chriſtian doſt thou alſo (O my ſoul) go about thy work; though upright in the main, yet how little zeal and activity doſt thou expreſs in thy duties? Awake love and zeal, ſeeſt thou not the toyl and pains men take for the world? how do they prevent the dawning of the day? and labour as in the very fire till night; and all this for a trifle! ſhould not every drop of ſweat which I ſee trickle from their brows, fetch (as it were) a drop of blood from my heart? who am thus convinced and reproved of ſhameful lazineſs, by their indefatigable diligence. Do they pant after the duſt of the earth? *Amos* 2.7. and ſhall not I pant after God? *Pſal.* 42.1. Ah, my ſoul! it was not wont to be ſo with thee, in the dayes of my firſt profeſſion. Should I have had no more communion with God in duties then, it would have broken my heart: I ſhould have been weary of my life. Is this a time for one to ſtand idle, who ſtands at the door of eternity? What, now ſlack handed, when ſo neer to my everlaſting reſt! *Rom.* 13.11. or haſt thou found the work of God ſo unpleaſant to thee? *Prov.* 3.17. or the trade of godlineſs ſo unprofitable? *Pſal.* 19.11. Or knoweſt thou not, that millions now in hell periſhed for want of ſerious diligence in Religion? *Luke* 13.34. or doth my diligence for God, anſwer to that which *Chriſt* hath done and ſuffered, to purchaſe my happineſs? or to the preparations he hath made in heaven for me? or doſt thou forget that thy

Maſters

Masters eye is alwayes upon thee, whilst thou art lazing and loytering? or would the damned live at this rate, as I do, if their day of grace might be recalled? for shame (my soul) for shame! rouze up thy self, and fall to thy work, with a diligence answerable to the weight thereof: for it is no vain work concerning thee, it is thy life.

The *Poem.*

Religion WHEN advanc'd in power, Eph.5.25.
Will make you HUSBAND every hour.
'Twill make MEN strive with all their might,
And therein FIND a sweet delight. Luke 13.24.
If there were NOUGHT besides that pay, Psal.119.47.
Christ gives TO cheer us in our way; Psal. 19.9.
Should we not DO the best we can?
For there's NO such reward from man. Psal.73.25.
Shall others WORK, and not regard Amos.2.7.
Their strength; TO get a small reward? Eccles.6.7.
Whilst we TURN slugs, and loyter thus?
Oh that THEIR zeal might quicken us! Psal.4.6.
Why are our HANDS, and feet so slow, Rom.12.11.
When we UNTO our business go?
How can we THEN Christ's pay expect, Gal.6.16.
And yet the CHRISTIANS work reject? Heb.12.24.
If this, then ALSO that embrace
Them both: IF not, we both disgrace. Mat.20.21,22.
Some if THEY could these two divide,
T'would PLEASE them well, with Christ to side, Mat.19.22.
But if they MAY not, then it were
As good CEASE pleading, they'l not hear.
Rouze up FROM sloth, (my soul) betake Gal.6.9.
Thee to thy WORK, no cavils make.
O strive, AND try! Saints say that even Luke 13.24.
The pain they TAKE, hath much of heaven. Psal.19.10.
But yet THEIR best wine's kept till last, Joh.20.10.
Their rest, and EASE comes all so fast. Heb.4 ult.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

The hardest labourers, are the thriving men.
If you'l have thriving souls, be active then.

OBSERVATION.

Upon the thriftiness of the Husbandman.

INdustry and diligence is the way to thrive and grow rich in the world. The earth must be manured, or its increase is in vain expected; *Qui fugit molam, fugit farinam*; he that refuses the mill, refuses the meal, (saith the Proverb) the diligent soul shall be made fat. *Solomon* hath two proverbs concerning thriftiness and increase in the world. In *Prov.* 10.4. he saith, *The hand of the diligent maketh rich.* And *v.*22. he saith, *The blessing of the Lord maketh rich.* These are not *contradictory*, but *confirmatory* each of other; one speaks of the *principal*, the other of the *instrumental* cause. Diligence without Gods blessing will not do it; and that blessing cannot be expected without diligence; therefore Husbandmen ply their business with unwearied pains, they do even lodge in the midst of their labours, as that good Husband *Boaz* did, *Ruth* 2.3. they are *parsimonious* of their time, but *prodigal* of their sweat and strength, because they find this to be the thriving way.

APPLICATION.

AS nature opens her treasures to none but the diligent, so neither doth grace. He that will be *rich*, must be a *painful* Christian; and whosoever will closly ply the trade of godliness, shall comfortably and quickly find, *That in keeping Gods commands there is great reward*, Psal. 19.11. God is a *bountiful rewarder of such as diligently seek him*, Heb. 11:6. They must not indeed work for wages, nor yet will God suffer their work to go unrewarded; yea, it sufficiently reward it self, 1 *Tim.* 6.6. and its reward is twofold, (1) present, and in part; (2) future and in full, *Mark* 10.29, 30. Now in this time an hundred-fold, even from suffering, which seems the most unprofitable part of the work, and in the world to come, life everlasting. If you ask what prese

Non mercenarii sed operarii.

advan

advantage Christians have by their diligence? I answer, as much and more than the Husbandman hath from all his toyls and labours. Let us compare the particulars, and see what the Husbandman gets, that the Christian gets not also. Compare your gains, and you'l quickly see the odds.

1. You get credit and reputation by your diligence; 'tis a commendation and honour to you, to be active and stirring men: But how much more honour doth God put upon his laborious servants? 'Tis the highest honour of a creature, to be active and useful for its God. Saints are called *vessels of honour*, as they are fitted for the Masters use, 2 *Tim.* 2. 21. Wherein consists the honour of *Angels*, but in this; that they are ministring spirits, serviceable creatures? And all the *Apostles* gloried in the title of servants. The lowest office in which a man can serve God, even that of a *Nethinim*, or door keeper, which was the lowest order or rank of officers in the house of God, *Ezek.* 44. 10, 11. is yet preferred by *David* before the service of the greatest Prince on earth, *Psal.* 84. 10. 'Tis no small honour to be active for God.

2. You have this benefit by your labour, that thereby you avoid loose and evil company, which would draw you into mischief. By diligence for God, the Christian also is secured from temptations; *God is with them, while they are with him*, 2 *Chron.* 15. 2. Communion with God in the way of duty, is a great preservative against temptations. The *School-men* put the question, how the Angels and glorified Saints become impeccant? and resolve it thus: That they are secured from sin, by the beatifical Vision; and sure I am, that the Visions of God, not only in glory, but now also in duty, are marvellous defences against sin; and they that are most active for God, have the fullest and clearest visions of God, *Job.* 14. 21.

3. You have this benefit by your labour, that it tends much to the health of your bodies. The Christian hath this benefit by his labour, that it tends to a healthful state of soul; *The way of the Lord is strength to the upright*, Prov. 10. 29. As those that follow their daily labours in the field, have much more health than Citizens that live idley, or Scholars that

live a sedentary life. So the active Christian enjoys more spiritual health, and is troubled with fewer complaints than others.

4. By diligence in your civil imployments, you preserve your estates, and are kept from running behind-hand in the world. *Bayliffs* trouble not such mens doors; they usually have the fore-foot of their neighbours. And by activity and diligence for God, souls are kept from backsliding, and running back in their graces and comforts. Remissions and intermissions in our duties, are the first steps and degrees by which a soul declines and wastes, as to his spiritual estate.

Your pains and diligence in the fields, makes your beds sweet to you at night, *Eccl.* 5. 12. *Rest is sweet to a labouring man, whether he eat little or much.* But the diligent life of a Christian makes the clods of the valley, his grave sweet unto him, 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. 2 *King.* 20. 3. *Remember now, O Lord, how I have walked before thee*, &c. Think Christian, how sweet it will be for thee, when thou comest to dye; to say then as thy Redeemer did, when near his death, *Joh.* 17. 4, 5. *I have finished the work thou gavest me to do; and now, O Father, glorifie me with thine own self.*

6. The expence of your sweat fills your purses, you get estates by your diligence and labour; but what are your gains to the gains of Christians? They can get in an hour, that which they will not part with for all the gold and silver on earth, *Prov.* 3. 14

So that compare these labourers, as to all their advantages, and you shall see, that there is no trade like that which the diligent Christian drives.

REFLECTIONS.

2. Reflections of the slothful soul.

Blush then, O my soul, at the consideration of thy laziness & sloth, which is attended with so many spiritual wants! and can I wonder at it, when I refuse the painful way of duty, in which the precious fruits of Godliness, are only to be found? If these fruits lay upon the surface of duty, or could be had with wishes, I should not want them; but to dig deep

deep and take pains I cannot. My desires, like those of the sloathful man, kill me, *because my hands refuse to labour*, Pro. 21. 25. If every duty were to be rewarded presently with gold, would I not have been more assiduous in them, than I have been? And yet I know that a heart full of the grace and comfort of the holy Ghost, is better than a house full of gold and silver. O what a composition of stupidity and sloth am I! I have been all for the short cut to comfort, when constant experience teacheth, that the farther way about, by painful duty, is the neerest way to it. What pains do Husbandmen take? what perils do Seamen run, for a little gain; O sluggish heart! wilt thou do nothing for eternal treasures?

Secondly, if there be such great rewards attending diligence in duty, then why art thou so apt (O my soul) to cast off duty, because thou findest not present comfort in it? how quickly am I discouraged, if I presently find not what I expect in duty? Whereas, the Well is deep, and much pains must be taken to draw up those waters of joy, *Isa.* 12. 3. there is a golden vein in the mount of duty, but it lyes deep; and because I meet not with it as soon as I expect, my lazy heart throws by the shovel, and cryes, dig I cannot. 2.

Thirdly, if this be indeed the rich and thriving trade, why do I peddle about the poor low things of the world so much, neglecting the rich trade of godliness for it? O, how much of my time and strength, have these things devoured? Had I imployed that time in communion with God, would it not have turn'd to a better account? Think'st thou in earnest, O my soul, that God hath indowed thee with such excellent faculties, capable of the most divine and heavenly imployments, or that Jesus Christ hath shed his invaluably precious bloud, or that he hath sent forth the glorious spirit of holiness, and all this to fit men for no higher or nobler imployments than these? 3. The worldlings Reflection.

Is this the end of thy wonderful creation? doth God whirl about the heavens in endless revolutions, to beget time for this? or doth he not rather expect that the weightiest work should engross thy greatest strength, and choicest hours? O, that I could once consider, what a good Master

Christians serve, who will not only abundantly reward them at night; but brings them their food into the field to incourage them in their labour! What pity is it, that so good a Master should be so badly served as he hath been by me! Heark, how he pleads to gain my heart.

The *POEM*, by way of Dialogue betwixt Christ and the world.

CHRIST.

John 6. 27. 1 Cor. 7. 31. Mat. 16. 26.

O Why so free of sweat and time?
For what ere long will not be thine.
Or if it might, thou sell'st to loss,
A precious soul for lasting dross.

1 Tim. 6. 6

To serve my hands, and toyling brains.
Might be imploy'd for better gains.

Mark. 4. 19.

Would'st thou but work as hard for me,
As for the world, which cozens thee;

Prov. 8. 19.

Thy gains should be a thousand fold:
For my revenue's more then gold.

WORLD.

Soul, I have always found thee willing,
Rather by me to earn a shilling;
Than trust uncertain things which lye,
Beyond thee in eternity.
Shall things unseen now tempt thee? tush,
A bird in hand's worth two i'th bush
I pay thy wages down in hand,
This thou canst feel, taste, understand.
O let not such a vain pretence,
Prevail against thy very sence.

CHRIST

CHRIST.

Thus beasts are led, thus birds are snar'd,
Thus souls for ruine are prepar'd.
What? trust no farther then you see,
You trust a thief as far as me.
Deluded wretch, will nought but sight
And sence convince thee? O how right
How just is God? whose direful scourge
Such Arguments in hell shall urge.

Iob. 33. 11.
Eccles. 11. 9.
John 20. 29.

2 Tim. 3. 13.
Rom. 2. 5.

Mark 6 16.

WORLD.

Christ threatens wrath to come, but I
Do threaten thee with poverty.
And why wilt thou thy self, and those
That are so dear to wants expose?
Come, see the Saints; for all their brags:
How well they thrive, they'r cloath'd with rags.

CHRIST.

If my dear Saints in rags do go,
'Tis not Religion cloathes them so;
But by such wants the Lord prepares
Their souls against thy killing snares.
They all are heirs, though under age
Expectants of their heritage
Kept short for present, yet contemn
A change with those, that scoff at them.

1 Tim. 4. 8.
1 Cor. 1. 28, 29.
1 Tim. 6. 9.
James 1. 5.
Jude 21.

Psal. 17. 13, 14.

WORLD.

It is in vain to plead for I
With present things charm powerfully.
Wo e're thou offer it, they'l despise;
I hold them prisoners by their eyes.

CHRIST.

CHRIST.

Luke 19. 27. Isa. 30. 8, 9. Jude 5. 2 Pet. 3. 7.

If they will serve no other Lord,
Then let it stand upon record
Against their souls that they refus'd
My wages, and my grace abus'd.
Remember this when they shall see
All turn'd to ashes that's in thee.

ANOTHER.

None will deny, but those are blessed pains,
Which are attended with the richest gains.
Grant this, and then most clearly 'tis inferr'd,
Soul work to all deserves to be preferr'd.
This is an unknown trade, Oh, who can count,
To what the gains of godliness amount?
For one poor shilling, O, what resks some run?
Some toyling as i'th fire, from Sun to Sun!
Whereas one hour spent with God brings in
Such heavenly treasures, that poor souls have been
Inrich'd for ever. Even as you see
A Princes Favourite upon the knee,
Can in an hours time more wealth obtain;
Than all your lives by labour you can gain.
Prayer gains are great, and quick returns are made.
Sure then the Christian drives the richest trade.
'Tis true, the hypocrite that never drove
A serious trade for heaven may bankrupt prove;
But holy souls which mind, and closely ply
Their business, greatly are inrich'd thereby.
The difference 'twixt the one, and t'others best
By such a Simile as this expresst.
As in a summers day you often see,
The wanton Butterfly and painful Bee;

On

On fragrant flowers fix, whence one doth strive
To bear his precious burden to the Hive:
The other's pains no profit with it brings,
His time is spent in painting of his wings.
When Winter comes, the Bee hath full supplies,
The other creeps into an hole and dyes.
Like different events shall be betwixt
The painful Saint, and lazy Notionist.

CHAP. III.

The Plowman sings and whistles though he sweat,
Shall Christians droop, because their work is great?

Upon the cheerfulness of the Husbandman.

OBSERVATION.

THough the labours of Husbandmen are very great and toylsom, yet with what cheerfulness do they go through them? It is very delightful to hear the melody they make by whistling, as they follow the Plow; yea, the very horses have their Bells, which make a pleasant noise. *Horses* (saith Mr. *Fuller*) *will do more for a whistle, than a whip*; and their Bells do as it were, gingle away their weariness. I have been often delighted with this Countrey musick, whereby they sweeten their hard labours with an innocent pleasure, and verifie the saying of the Poet:

Ovid. *Tempus in agrorum cultu consumere dulce est.*
Although they plow from morning until night.
Time steals away with pleasure and delight.

APPLICATION.

BUt how much greater cause have the people of God to address themselves unto his work, with all cheerfulness of spirit? And indeed, so far as the heart is spiritual, it delights

lights in its duties. 'Tis true, the work of a Christian is painful, and much more spending than the Husbandmans (as was opened *Chap.* 1.) but then it as much exceeds in the delights and pleasures that attend it. What is the Christians work, but *with joy to draw water out of the wells of salvation? Isa.* 12. 3. You may see what a pleasant path the path of duty is, by the cheerfulness of those that have walked in them, *Psal.* 119. 14. *I have rejoyced in the way of thy judgments, as much as in all riches.* And by the promises that are made to such, *Psal.* 138. 5. *Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the Lord, for great is the glory of the Lord.* And again, *You shall have a song as in the night when an holy solemnity is kept and gladness of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe, to come to the mountain of the Lord, to the mighty one of Israel*, Isa. 30. 29.

And lastly, by the many commands whereby joy in the wayes of the Lord is made the duty of the Saints. *Rejoyce in the Lord, ye righteous, for praise is comely for the upright*, Psa. 97. 12. Rejoyce, *and again I say rejoyce.* Philip. 4. 4. Where the command is doubled; yea, not only simple rejoycing, but the highest degree of that duty comes within the command, *Psal.* 132. 9, 16: *Shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.* And *Luke* 6. 22, 23. they are bid, *to leap for joy*, when about the difficultest part of their work, and that you may see there is sufficient ground for it. and that it is not like the mad mirth of sinners, be pleased to consider,

1. The nature of the work about which they are imployed; it is the most excellent and heavenly imployment that ever souls were acquainted with. O what a ravishing and delightsome thing it is, to walk with God! And yet by this, the whole work of a Christian is expressed, *Gen.* 17. 1. Can any life compare with this for pleasure; Can they be chill, that walk in the Sun-shine? or sad, that abide in the fountain of all delights? and walk with him whose name is the God of all comfort, 2 *Cor.* 1. 3. *In whose presence is the fulness of joy*, Psal. 16. 11. O what an Angelical life doth a Christian then live!

2. Or, (2ly.) If we consider the variety of spiritual imployments; *varietas delectat.* Change of imployment, takes off the

the tediousnes of labour. Variety of voices please the ear: variety of colours delight the eye; the same meat prepared several wayes, pleases the palate more, and clogs it less. But O the variety of choice dishes wherewith God entertains his people in a Sabbath! as the Word, Prayer, Sacraments, &c. *Isa.* 58. 13. If thou call the Sabbath thy delights; or, as *Tremelius* renders it, thy delicate things. *My soul* (saith *David*) *shall be satisfied, as with marrow and fatness*, Psa. 63. 5.

3. Or, lastly, If we consider the sutableness of this work, to a regenerate soul. Is it any pain for a bird to flye? or a fish to swim? Is the eye tired with beautiful objects? or the ear with melodious sounds? As little can a spiritual soul be wearied with spiritual and heavenly exercises. *Rom.* 7. 22. *I delight in the Law of God, after the inner man. Gravia non gravitant in eorum loco* (saith the *Philosopher*) weighty things are not heavy in their own element, or center. And surely, God is the center of all gracious spirits. A Saint can sit from morning to night to hear discourses of the love and loveliness of Jesus Christ. The sight of your thriving flocks, and flourishing fields, cannot yeild you that pleasure which an upright soul can find in one quarter of an hours communion with God. *They that are after the flesh* saith the Apostle. *Rom.* 8. 5.) *do mind the things of the flesh, and they that are after the spirit, the things of the spirit.* But then, look how much heavenly objects transcend earthly ones, and how much the soul is more capable of delight in those objects, than the gross and duller sences are in theirs; so much doth the pleasure arising from the duty, excel all sensitive delights on earth.

REFLECTIONS.

The carnal hearts Reflection.

How am I cast and condemned by this, may I say; who never savoured this spiritual delight in holy duties. When I am about my earthly imployments; I can go on unweariedly, from day to day; all the way is down hill to my nature: and the wheels of my affections being oyled with carnal delight, run so fast, that they have need most times of trigging. Here I rather need the curb, than the spur. O, how fleet and nim-

ble are my spirits, in these their pursuits! But O, what a slug am I in religious duties! Sure if my heart were renewed by grace, I should delight in the Law in God, *Rom.* 7. 22. All the world is alive in their wayes, every creature injoyes his proper pleasure; and is there no delight to be found in the paths of holiness? is godliness only a dry root, that bears no pleasant fruits? No, no, there are doubtless incomparable pleasures to be found therein: but such a carnal heart as mine savours them not.

The Hypocrites Reflection.

I cannot say, but I have found delight in Religious duties, but they have been only such as rather sprang from the ostentation of gifts and applauses of men, than any sweet and real communion I have had with God through them; they have rather proved food and fewel to my pride, than food to my soul. Like the Nightingale I can sing sweetly, when I observe others to listen to me, and be affected with my musick. O, false deceitful heart, such delight as this will end in howling! were my spirit right, it would as much delight in retirements for the enjoyment of God, as it doth in those duties that are most exposed to the observation of man. Will such a spring as this maintain a stream of affections, when carnal motives fail? What wilt thou answer (O my soul) to that question, *Job* 27. 9, 10. *Will God hear his cry when trouble comes upon him? Will he delight himself in the Almighty? Will he alwayes call upon God?* What wilt thou reply to this question? Deceive not thou thy self, O my soul! thou wilt doubtless be easily perswaded to let go that thou never delightedst in; and from an hypocrite in Religion, quickly become an Apostate from Religion.

The upright hearts Reflection.

From all this, the upright heart takes advantage to rouze up its delight in God; and thus it expostulateth with it self: Doth the Plowman sing amidst his drudging labours, and whistle away his weariness in the fields, and shall I droop amidst such heavenly imployment? O my soul, what want'st thou here, to provoke thy delight? If there be such an affection as delight in thee, methinks, such an object, as the blessed face of God in Ordinances should excite it. Ah, how would this ennoble all my services, and make them Angel-like!

like! How glad are those blessed creatures to be imployed for God? No sooner were they created, but they sang together, and shouted for joy, *Job.* 38. 7. How did they fill the Air with heavenly melody, when sent to bring the joyful tydings of a Saviour to the world? ascribing glory to God in the highest, even to the highest of their powers: yea, this delight would make all my duties Christ-like; and the nearer that pattern, the more excellent. He delighted to do his Fathers will, it was to him meat and drink, *Psal.*40. 7. *John* 4. 32. 34.

Yea, it would not only ennoble, but facilitate all my duties, and be to me as wings to a bird in flying, or sails to a Ship in motion, *Non tardat ungta rota*; oyled wheels run freely; *Or ever I was aware, my soul made me like the chariots of Aminadab.* O, what is the reason (my God) my delight in thee should be so little? Is it not, because my unbelief is so great? Rouze up my delights, O thou fountain of pleasure! and let me swim down the stream of holy joyes in duty, into the boundless Ocean of those immense delights that are in thy presence, and at thy right hand for evermore.

The *Poem.*

O What a (1) dull despondent heart is mine?
That takes no more (2) delight in things divine.
When all the Creatures both in heaven and earth:
Enjoy their (3) pleasures, and are big with mirth.
(4) Angels and Saints that are before the Throne;
In extasies, and raptures every one.
Perpetually is held: each blessed spirit
The purest (5) highest joyes; doth there inherit.
The Saints on earth, in their imperfect state;
Those Peerless joys, by (6) faith do antedate.
To natural men, who savour not this pleasure;
Yet bounteous nature doth unlock her treasure
Of (7) sensitive deligh s. Yea, strange to tell;
Bold sinners (8) rant it all the way to hell.

(1) Isa. 64. 7
(2) Psa. 94. 19
(3) Psa. 145. 10.
(4) Rev. 5. 11. 12, 13.
(5) Mat. 25. 21.
(6) 1 Pet. 1. 8, 9
(7) Act. 14. 17.
(8) Job 21. 11.

Like fiſh that play in *Jordans* ſilver ſtream,
So theſe in ſenſual luſts : and never dream
Of that dead Sea, to which the ſtream doth tend :
(9) Jam. 5 18. And to their pleaſures puts a (9) fatal end.
(1) Pſ. 104. 12. Yea (1) birds, and (2) beaſts as well as men, enjoy
(2) Pſ. 104. 11 Their innocent delights. Theſe Chirp and play ;
The cheerful birds among the branches ſing,
And make the neighbouring groves with muſick ring.
With varions warbling notes they all invite,
Our raviſht ears, with pleaſure and delight.
(3) Pſa. 114. 6. The new-faln Lambs (3) will in a Sun-ſhine day,
About their feeding Dams jum up and play.
(4) Jer. 2. 13. Are (4) Ciſterns ſweet? and is the fountain bitter?
Or can the Sun be dark, when glow-worms glitter?
(5) Iſa. 30. 29. Have (5) inſtruments, their ſweet melodious airs?
All creatures their delights, and Saints not theirs?
(6) Pſal. 4. 7. Yea, theirs (6) tranſcend theſe ſenſual ones, as far ;
As noon-day *Phebus* doth a twinkling ſtar.
Why droop I then, may any creature have
A life like mine for pleaſure? who ere gave
(7) Joh. 15. 11 The like (7) incouragement that Chriſt hath given,
To do his will on earth, as 'tis in heaven?

CHAP. IV.

Upon the due quality of arable Land.

Corn-Land muſt neither be too fat, nor poor?
The middle ſtate ſuits beſt with Chriſtians ſure.

OBSERVATION.

HUsbandmen find by experience, that their arable Lands may be dreſt too much, as well as too little. If the ſoil be over rank, the ſeed ſhoots up ſo much into the ſtalk, that it ſeldom ears well ; and if too thin and poor, it wants its due nutriment, and comes not to perfection. Therefore their care is to keep it in heart, but not to overdreſs or underdreſs

derdreſs it. The end of all their coſt and pains about it is fruit; and therefore reaſon tells them, that ſuch a ſtate and temperament of it, as beſts fits it for fruit, is beſt both for it and them.

APPLICATION.

AND doth not ſpiritual experience teach Chriſtians, that a mediocrity and competency of the things of this life, beſt fits them for the fruits of obedience, which is the end and excellency of their beings? A man may be over mercied, as well as over afflicted. *Rare fumant fœlicibus aræ*, the altars of the rich ſeldom ſmoke. When our outward injoyments are by providence ſhaped and fitted to our condition, as a ſuit is to the body, that ſits cloſs and neat, neither too curt nor long; we cannot deſire a better condition in this world. This was it that wiſe *Agur* requeſted of God, *Prov.* 30. 8. 9. *Give me neither poverty nor riches, but feed me with food convenient for me, leſt I be full and deny thee and ſay who is the Lord? or leſt I be poor and ſteal and take the name of my God in vain.* Againſt both he prayes *equally*, not *abſolutely*; that had been his ſin, but comparatively and ſubmiſſively to the will of God. He had rather, if God ſee it fit, to avoid both of theſe extreams; but what would he have then? why, food convenient. Or, according to the *Hebrew*, give me my prey or ſtatute-bread; which is a Metaphor from birds which flye up and down to prey for their young, and what they get they diſtribute among them; they bring them enough to preſerve their lives, but not more than enough to lye moldering in the neſt. Such a proportion *Agur* deſired; and the reaſon why he deſired it, is drawn from the danger of both the extreams He meaſured (like a wiſe Chriſtian) the conveniency or inconveniency of his eſtate in the world, by its ſutableneſs or unſutableneſs to the end of his being; which is the ſervice of God. He accounted the true excellency of his life to conſiſt in its reference and tendency to the glory of his God; and he could not ſee how a *redundancy*, or too great a *penury* of earthly comforts, could fit him for that; but a middle ſtate equally

equally removed from both extreams, beſt fitted that end. And this was all that good *Jacob*, who was led by the ſame ſpirit lookt at, *Gen.* 28. 20. *And* Jacob *vowed a vow, ſaying, if God will be with me, and keep me in the way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and raiment to put on, ſo that I come again to my fathers houſe in peace, then ſhall the Lord be my God.* Poor *Jacob*, he deſires no great matters in the world, food and rayment will ſatisfie him; in ſpiritual things his deſires are boundleſs, he is the moſt greedy and unſatisfied man in the world, *Hoſ.* 12. 4. but in the matters of this life, if he can get from God but *offam & aqam*, a morſel of meat, and a mouth full of water, he will not envy the richeſt *Cræſus* or *Craſſus* upon earth. Meat and drink are the riches of Chriſtians, *Divitiæ ſunt ad legem naturæ compoſita paupertas* (ſaith *Pomponius Attius*) riches are ſuch a poverty or mediocrity, as hath enough for natures uſes; and ſuch a ſtate is beſt accommodated, both to the condition and to the deſires of a Saint.

Cibus & potus ſunt Divitiæ Chriſtianorum.

1. To his condition, for what is a Saint but a ſtranger and Pilgrim upon earth, a man in a ſtrange Countrey travelling homeward? So *David* profeſſed himſelf, *Pſal.* 119. 19. *I am a ſtranger in this earth.* And ſo thoſe worthies, who are now at home in heaven, *Heb.* 11. 13. they profeſſed themſelves to be ſtrangers and Pilgrims upon earth, and to ſeek a Countrey; a *viaticum* contents a traveller, he will not cumber himſelf with ſuperfluous things which would rather clog and tire, than expedite and help him in his journey.

2. It ſuits bed with his deſires, I mean his regular and adviſed deſires. For,

1. A gracious ſoul earneſtly deſires a free condition in the world, he is ſenſible he hath much work to do, a race to run, and is loath to be clog'd or have his foot in the ſnare of the cares or pleaſures of this life. He knows that fulneſs expoſes to wantonneſs and irreligion, *Deut.* 6. 12. *Hoſ.* 13. 6. 'Tis hard, in the midſt of ſo many tempting objects, to keep the golden bridle of moderation upon the affections. The heart of a Chriſtian, like the Moon, commonly ſuffers an eclipſe when it is at the full, and that by the interpoſition of the earth.

It

It was *Solomons* fulneſs that drew out and diſſolved his ſpirits, and brought him to ſuch a low ebb in ſpirituals, that it remains a queſtion with ſome, Whether he ever recovered it to his dying day. As it is the miſery of the poor to be neglected of men, ſo it is the miſery of the rich to neglect God. Who can be poorer, than to have the world, and love it? or richer, than to enjoy but little of it, and live above it?

And on the other ſide, extream poverty is no leſs expoſed to ſin and danger, *Levit.* 6. 2, 3, 4. As high and lofty trees are ſubject to ſtorms and tempeſts, ſo the loweſt ſhrubs to be brows'd on by every beaſt: and therefore, a Saint deſires a juſt competency as the *fitteſt*, becauſe the *freeſt* ſtate.

A gracious perſon deſires no more but a competency, becauſe there is moſt of God's love and care diſcovered in giving in our daily bread, by a daily providence. It is betwixt ſuch a condition, and a fulneſs of creature-proviſions in our hand, as it was betwixt *Egypt* and *Canaan*; *Egypt* was water'd with the foot from the River *Nilus*, and little of God was ſeen in that mercy; but *Canaan* depended upon the dews and ſhowers of heaven; and ſo, every ſhower of rain was a refreſhing ſhower to their ſouls, as well as bodies. Moſt men that have a ſtock of creature-comforts in their hands, look upon all as coming in an ordinary natural courſe, and ſee very little of God in their mercies. *Pope Adrian* built a Colledge at *Lovain*, and cauſed this inſcription to be written, in letters of gold on the gates thereof; *Trajectum plantavit, Lovanium rigavit, Cæſar dedit incrementum.* (i. e.) *Utrecht* planted me, *Lovain* water'd me, and *Cæſar* gave the increaſe. One to reprove his folly, wrote underneath, *Hic Deus nihil fecit*; Here God did nothing. Carnal men, they ſow, and reap, and eat, and look no farther.

2.

But now, when a man ſees his mercies come in by the ſpecial and aſſiduous care of God for him, there is a double ſweetneſs in thoſe mercies; the natural ſweetneſs which comes from the creature it ſelf. every one, even the beaſts can taſte that as well as thee; but beſide that, there is a ſpiritual ſweetneſs, far exceeding the former, which none but a

believer

believer taſtes: and much of that comes from the manner in which he receives it, becauſe it comes (be it never ſo courſe or little) as a Covenant-mercy to him. *He hath given bread to them that fear him, he is ever mindful of his Covenant, Pſal.* 111. 5. *Luther*, who made many a meal upon a broiled Herring, was wont to ſay, *Mendicato pane hic vivamus, an non hoc pulchre ſarcitur in eo, quod paſcimur pane cum angelis & vita æterna. Chriſto & Sacramentis*; Let us be content with courſe fare here, have we not the bread that came down from heaven? do we not feed with Angels; A pregnant inſtance of the ſweetneſs of ſuch mercies, is given us by a worthy Divine of our own, Mr. *Iſaac Ambroſs.* "For mine own "part (ſaith he) however the Lord hath ſeen cauſe to give me "but a poor pittance of outward things (for which I bleſs "his name) yet in the income thereof, I have many times "obſerv'd ſo much of his peculiar providence, that thereby "they have been very much ſweetned, and my heart hath "been raiſed to admire his grace. When of late under an "hard diſpenſation (which I judge not meet to mention, "wherein I ſuffer'd with inward peace conſcientiouſly) all "ſtreams of wonted ſupplies being ſtopt, the waters of re-"lief for my ſelf and family did run low. I went to bed "with ſome ſtaggerings and doubtings of the fountains let-"ting out it ſelf for our refreſhing, but ere I did awake in "the morning, a Letter was brought to my bed ſide, which "was ſigned by a choice friend, Mr. *Anthony Aſh*, which "reported ſome unexpected breakings out of God's good-"neſs for my comfort. Theſe are ſome of his lines—Your "God, who hath given you an heart thankfully to record "your experiences of his goodneſs, doth renew experiences "for your incouragement. Now I ſhall report one which will "raiſe your ſpirit towards the *God* of your mercy, &c. Where-upon he ſweetly concludes, "One morſel of God's provi-"ſion, (eſpecially if it come unexpected, and upon prayer, "when wants are moſt) will be more ſweet to a ſpiritual re-"liſh, than all former full injoyments were.

Epiſtle to the Earl of *Bedford ante ultima.*

Many mercies come unask'd for, and they require thankfulneſs; but when mercies come in upon prayer, and as a return

return of prayer, their ſweetneſs more than doubles; for now its both God's bleſſing upon his own inſtitution, and a ſeal ſet to his promiſe at once, *Pſal.* 66. 16, 17. Doubtleſs *Hannah* found more comfort in her *Samuel*, and *Rachel* in her *Naphthali*, (the one being ask'd of God, and the other wraſtled for with God (as their names import) than mothers ordinarily do in their children.

REFLECTION.

Do the people of God deſire only ſo much of the creature as may fit them for the ſervice of God; what a wretch then am I that have deſired only ſo much of Religion as may fit me to gain the creature! As God's people have ſubjected all their creature-injoyments to Religion, ſo oppoſitely, O my ſoul, thou haſt ſubjected Religion to thy worldly intereſt and deſigns. Inſtead of eating and drinking to ſerve God, I have ſerved God that I might eat and drink; yea, I have not only acted below Religion, but below reaſon alſo; for reaſon dictates plainly, that the means muſt never be more excellent than the end. Wretch that I am, to make Religion a ſlave to my luſt, a ſtirrup to advancement, an artifice to carry on my carnal deſigns: verily I have my reward; and this is all the good I am ever like to get by it.

The Reflection of the deſigning Hypocrite.

And no leſs ſhould the worlding tremble, to conſider how he hath caſt off the duties of Religion, made them ſtand aſide and give place to the world. Inſtead of deſiring ſo much only as might make him ſerviceable to God, he thruſts aſide the ſervice of God to get as much of the world as he can, who is ſo far from making godlineſs the end of his creature-comforts, that he rather looks upon it as an obſtacle and hinderance to them. May not the very Heathens make me bluſh? could *Ariſtotle* deliver this as a true rule to proſperity, to make Religion our firſt and chief care? could *Ariſtippus* ſay, he would rather neglect his means than his mind? his Farm than his ſoul? Will the very *Mahometans*, how urgent ſoever their buſineſs be, lay it all aſide, five times in the day to pray? yea, is it common to a Proverb among the very *Papiſts*,

The Worldlings Reflection.

that Mass and meat hinders no man; and yet I that profess my self a Christian, thrust out duty for every trifle? Oh wretched soul! how hath the God of this world blinded mine eyes? can the world indeed do that for me, that Christ can do? hath it ever proved true to them that trusted it and doted on it? hath it not at last turn'd them off as men turn off a Sumpter horse at night, that hath been a drudge to carry their gold and silver for them all day, and at last is turn'd out with an empty belly and a galled back? O how righteous will that sentence of God be? Go cry to the gods whom thou hast served!

The gracious soul's Reflection.

And may not many gracious hearts turn in upon themselves with shame and sorrow, to consider how unsatisfied they have been in that condition, that others have preferr'd and esteem'd as the greatest of all outward mercies? I have indeed been fed with food covenient, but not contentted: How hath my heart been tortured from day to day with anxious thoughts, what I shall eat and drink, and wherewith I and mine should be cloathed? I pretend indeed that I care but for a competency of the world, but sure I am, my cares about it have been incompetent. Come my distrustful earthly heart, let me propund a few questions to thee about this matter, and answer truly to what I shall now demand of thee.

1. Quest. Hast thou here a continuing City? art thou at home, or upon thy journey, that thou art so solicitous about the world? thy profession indeed speaks thee a stranger upon earth, but thy conversation a home-dweller. *Erasmus* said he desired honors and riches, no more than a weary horse doth a heavy Cloak-bag. Wouldst thou not account him a fool that would victual his Ship, as much to cross the Channel to *France*, as if she were bound for the *East-Indies*? Alas! it will be but a little while, and then there will be no more need of any of these things. 'Tis sad, that a soul which stands at the door of eternity, should be perplexing it self about food and raiment.

2. Quest. Or, 2ly. Which of all the Saints hast thou known to be the better for much of the world? it hath been some mens utter

utter ruin. Seldom doth God suffer men to be their own carvers, but they cut their own fingers. *To give riches and pleasures to an evil man* (saith *Aristotle*) *is but to give wine to one that hath a Fever.* Where there is no *wants*, there is usually much *wantonness*. What a sad story was that of *Pius Quintus*; When I was in a low condition (said he) I had some comfortable hopes of my salvation, but when I came to be a Cardinal, I greatly doubted of it; but since I came to the Popedom, I have no hope at all. Though this poor undone wretch spake it out, and others keep it in, yet doubtless he hath many thousand fellows in the world, that might say as much, would they but speak the truth.

And even Gods own people, though the world hath not excluded them out of heaven, yet it hath sorely clog'd them in the way thither. Many that have been very humble, holy and heavenly in a low condition, have suffered a sad ebb in a full condition. What a cold blast have they felt coming from the cares and delights of this life, to chill both their graces and comforts! it had been well for some of God's people, if they had never known what prosperity meant.

Is not this a sad symptom of a declining state of soul, to be so hot, eager and anxious about the superfluous trifles of this life. Think'st thou, O my soul! that one who walks in the views of that glory above, and maintains a conversation in heaven, can be much taken with these vanities? do not the visions of God vail the tempting splendor of the creature! It was the opinion of some of the *Schoolmen*, that the reason why *Adam in Paradise* was not sensible of his nakedness, was because he was wholly taken up in conversing with God. But this is certain, lively and sweet communion with God, blunts and dulls the edge of the affections to earthly things; and canst thou be satisfied my soul with such gains as are attended with such spiritual losses? 3. *Quest.*

To conclude, is it not dishonourable to God, and a justification of the way of the world, for me that profess my self a Christian to be as eager after riches as other men? *After all these things do the nations seek*, Mat. 6. 32. If I had no father in heaven, nor promise in the word, it were another 4. *Quest.*

matter, but since my heavenly father knows what I have need of, and hath charged me to be careful in nothing, but only tell him my wants, *Phil.* 4. 6. How unbecoming a thing is it in me to live and act as I have done! Let me henceforth learn to measure and estimate my condition, rather by its usefulness to God than its content and ease to my flesh.

The *Poem.*

IF (1) fruit and service be indeed the end
To which my being and redemption tend,
Reason concludes, that state of all the rest
Which is most serviceable to be best.
And such a state experience shews to lye.
'Twixt (2) fulness, and a pinching poverty.
This golden *Mean*, is worth a golden *Mine*;
He that hath this, should be (3) asham'd to whine.
The full-fed Christian like the (4) Ox i'th stall,
Is no way fit to work or plow withal.
And (5) penury like *Pharoah*'s leaner kine,
Devours the fattest portions of our time.
That man with whom this earthly (6) pleasure's found,
Or in whose heart those anxious (7) cares abound;
And yet can walk by Scripture-rule and line,
Will need a better head and heart than mine.
A single (8) staff the traveller may find
Of use, and service; but if you should bind
A bundle of them to his back, they'l make
Him slack his pace and cry my shoulders (9) ake.
I am a (1) traveller, this world's my way.
A single staff may be of use to stay
My feeble body, if it do not crack,
By too hard (2) leaning on it; but my back
Will bear no more: Alas, I soon should tire.
And more than (3) one I cannot well desire.

(1) Isa. 5. 2.
(2) Prov. 30. 7, 8, 9.
(3) Heb. 13. 5.
(4) Deu. 32. 15.
(5) Prov. 30. 9.
(6) Luk. 8. 14.
(7) Luk. 8. 14.
(8) Mark. 6. 8.
(9) Hab. 3. 6.
(1) Ps. 119. 19. Heb. 11. 13, 14.
(2) Job 8. 15. Isa. 36. 6.
(3) Heb. 13. 5.

Lord

Lord, to (4)prescribe to thee becomes me not,
I rather do (5) submit unto my (6) lot;
But yet let condescending grace admit
Thy servants (7) suit this once, and this is it.
The staff of bread (8) convenient let me have,
And manage it (9) discreetly; so 'twill save
Thy feeble servant from the mire and (1) dirt.
But more or less than this may do me hurt.
Or if thou say thy servant shall have none,
Then strengthen faith that I may go (2) alone.

(4) Iob 21.22.
(5) Isa. 47. 4.
(6) Psa. 16.5, 6,7.
(7) Gen. 18.32.
(8) Prov. 30.8.
(9) Eccl. 6. 2.
(1) Pro. 30. 9.
(2) Hab. 3.17.

CHAP. V.

Spent barren Land you can restore and nourish.
Decayed Christians God can cause to flourish.

Upon the improvement of bad ground.

OBSERVATION.

WHen Land is spent out by tillage, or for want of manuring, the careful Husbandman hath many wayes to recover and bring it in heart again. He lets it lye fallow to give it rest, and time to recover it self, carries out his sand, lime and compost, to refresh and quicken it again, and in pasture and meadow ground, will wash it (if possible) with a current of water, or the float of the wayes after a fall of rain, which is to the earth as a spring of new bloud to a consumptive body. He cuts down and kills the weeds that suck it out, and causes them to make restitution of what they have purloined from it, by rotting upon the place where they grew. As careful are they to recover it when it is spent, as an honest Physician is of his patient in a languishing condition, for he knows his field will be as grateful to him, and fully requite his care and cost.

APPLI-

APPLICATION.

AS man's, so God's Husbandry is sometimes out of case, not by yielding too many crops, but too few. The mystical Husbandman hath some fields (I mean particular societies and persons) who were once fragrant and fruitful like a field which God had blessed, but are now decayed and grown barren; whose gleanings formerly, were more than their vintage now; the things that are in them are ready to dye, *Rev.* 3. 3. 'Tis possible, yea, too common for gracious souls to be reduced to a very low ebb, both of graces and comforts; how low I will not say: Our *British Divines* tell us That grace indeed cannot be totally intermitted, nor finally lost; but there may be an omission of the act, though not an amission of the habit: the act may be perverted, though the faith cannot be subverted; it may be shaken in, though not shaken out; its fruits may fall, but its sap lyes hid in the root; they demerit the loss of the kingdom, but lose it not effectively; the effect of justification may be suspended, but the state of the justified cannot be dissolved.

How far true grace in a believer may fail.

Gratia nec totaliter intermittitur, nec finaliter amittitur. Actus omittitur, habitus non amittitur. Actio pervertitur, fides non subvertitur. Concutitur, non excutitur. Defluit fructus, latet succus. Jus ad regnum amittunt demeritorie, non effective. Effectus justificationis suspenditur, at status justificati non dissolvitur. Sutf. Britt.

Certain it is, one that like *Paul* hath been rapt up with joy, even to the third heavens, and cryed, *I am more than a conqueror, who shall separate me from the love of God?* may at another time lye mourning as at the gates of death, crying, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* One that hath walked in sweet communion with God, sunning himself in the light of his countenance, may afterwards *walk in darkness, and see no light*, Isa. 50. 10. He that hath cast anchor within the vail, and rode securely in the peaceful harbour of assurance, may seem to feel his anchor

of

of hope come home to him, and go adrift into the stormy Ocean again, crying with the Church, *Lam.* 3. 18. *My hope is perished from the Lord.* His calm and clear Air may be over cast and clouded, yea filled with storms and tempests, lightnings and thunders; his graces, like under-ground flowers in the Winter, may all disappear, and hide their beautiful heads.

To *God* he may say, I am cast out of thy sight; I know thou canst do much, but wilt thou shew wonders to the dead?

To the *Promises* he may say, you are sweet things indeed, but what have I to do with you? I could once indeed rejoyce in you, as my portion; but now I doubt I grasped a shadow, a fancy instead of you. To *Saints* he may say, turn away from me, labour not to comfort me, O do not spill your precious ointments of consolation upon my head, for what have I to do with comfort? to former *experiences*, he may say in his haste, you are all lyars. To the *light of God's countenance*, he may say, farewel sweet light, I shall behold thee no more. To *Satan*, he may say, O mine enemy, thou hast at last prevailed against me, thou art stronger than I, and hast overcome. To *Duties* and *Ordinances*, he may say, where is the sweetness I once found in you? you were once sweeter to me than the hony comb; but now as tastless, as the white of an egg. O sad relapse? deplored change! *quantum mutatus ab illo?*

But will God leave his poor creatures helpless in such a case as this? Shall their leaf fall, their branches wither, their joy, their life, their heart depart? will he see their graces fainting, their hopes gasping, the new creature panting, the things that are in them ready to dye, and will he not regard it? yes, yes, *There is hope of a tree if it be cut down and the root thereof wax old in the earth, yet by the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs, like a plant,* Job 14. 8 9. This poor declined soul, as sad as it sits at the gates of hell, may rouze up it self at last, and say to *Satan* that stands triumphing over him, *Rejoyce not over me, O mine enemy, for though I fall, yet I shall arise; though I sit in darkness, the Lord will be a*

light

light unto me, Mich. 7. 8. He may raise up himself upon his bed of languishing for all this, and say to *God though thou hast chastened me sore, yet hast thou not given me over unto death.* He may turn about to the Saints, that have mourned for him, and with a lightsom countenance say, *I shall not dye but live, and declare the works of the Lord.* He may say to the *Promises*, you are the true and faithful sayings of God, my unbelief did bely you; I said in my haste you were lyars, but I eat my words, I am ashamed of my folly. Surely, O soul, there is yet hope in thine end, thou mayst be restored, *Psal.* 23. 3. thou mayst yet recover thy verdure, and thy dew be as the dew of herbs. For,

1. Is he not thy father, and a father full of compassions and bowels? And can a father stand by his dying child, see his fainting fits, hear his melting groans, and pity-begging looks, and not help him; especially having restoratives by him, that can do it? Surely, *as a father pities his own children, so will thy God pity thee*, Psal. 103. 12, 13. *He will spare thee, as a father spareth his own son that serves him*, Mal. 3. 17. Heark, how his bowels yern; *I have surely heard* Ephraim *bemoaning himself, is not* Ephraim *my dear son? is he not a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still, I will surely have mercy on him*, Jer. 31. 20.

2. Doth he not know thy life would be altogether useless to him, if he should not restore thee? what service art thou fit to perform to him, in such a condition? *Thy dayes will consume like smoke, whilst thy heart is smitten and withered like grass*, Psal. 102. 3, 4. Thy moneths will be moneths of vanity, they will fly away, and see no good, *Job* 7. 3. If he will but quicken thee again, then thou must call upon his name, *Psal.* 80. 18. but in a dead and languishing condition, thou art no more fit for any work of God, than a sick man is for manual labours; and surely he hath not put those precious and excellent graces of his Spirit within thee for nothing; they were planted there for fruit and service, and therefore doubtless he will revive thee again.

3. Yea, dost thou not think he sees thine inability to bear such a condition long? he knows *thy Spirit would fail before him*,

him, and the soul which he hath made, Isa. 57. 16. *David* told him as much, in the like condition, *Psal.* 143. 7, 8. *Hear me speedily, O Lord, for my spirit faileth; hide not thy face from me, lest I be like unto those that go down into the pit*; q.d. Lord make haste and recover my languishing soul; otherwise, whereas thou hast now a *sick child*, thou wilt shortly have a *dead child*.

And in like manner *Job* expostulated with him, *Job* 6. 1, 2, 3, 11, 12. *My grief is heavier than the sand of the Sea, my words are swallowed up, for the arrows of the Almighty are within me; and the poyson thereof drinks up my spirits: the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me, what is my strength that I should hope? is my strength the strength of stones? or are my bones of brass?* So *Chap.* 7. 12. *Am I a Sea, or a Whale?* &c. Other troubles a man may, but this he cannot bear, *Prov.* 18. 14. And therefore doubtless seasonable and gracious revivings will come, *He will not stir up all his wrath, for he remembers thou art but flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again*, Psal. 78. 38, 39. He hath wayes enough to do it, if he do but unvail his blessed face and make it shine again upon thee, thou art saved, *Psal.* 80. 3. the manifestations of his love, will be to thy soul, as showers to the parched grass; thy soul that now droops, and hangs the wing, shall then revive and leap for joy, *Isa.* 61. 1. A new face shall come upon thy graces, they shall bud again, and blossom as a rose; if he do but send a spring of auxiliary grace into thy soul, to actuate the dull habits of inherent grace, the work is done; then shalt thou return to thy first works again, *Rev.* 2. 4, 5. and sing as in the dayes of thy youth.

Gratia gratiam postulat.

REFLECTIONS.

O this is my very case, saith many a poor Christian; thus my soul languishes and droops from day to day: 'tis good news indeed, that God both can and will restore my soul, but sad that I should fall into such a state. How unlike am I to what once I was? Surely, as the old men wept, when they saw how short the second *Temple* came of the glory of the

first, so may I sit down and weep bitterly, to consider how much my first love, and first duties excelled the present. For,

1. A convictive Reflection.

Is my heart so much in heaven now, as it was wont to be? Say, O my soul! dost thou not remember, when like the beloved Disciple thou *layest* in *Jesus* bosom? how didst thou sweeten communion with him? how restless and impatient wast thou in his absence! Divine withdrawments were to thee as the hell of hell: What a burden was the world to me in those dayes! Had it not been for conscience of my duty, I could have been willing to let all lye, that communion with Christ might suffer no interruption. When I awaked in the night, how was the darkness inlightned by the heavenly glimpses of the countenance of my God upon me? How did his company shorten those hours, and beguil the tediousness of the night? O my soul, speak thy experience, is it now as it was then! No, no, those dayes are past and gone, and thou become much a stranger to that heavenly life. Art thou able with truth to deny this charge? When occasionally I pass by those places, which were once to me as *Jacob's Bethel* to him; I sigh at the remembrance of former passages betwixt me and heaven there; and say with *Job*, Chap. 29. *O that it were with me as in moneths past, as in the dayes when God preserved me, when his candle shined upon my head, when by his light I walked through darkness, when the Almighty was yet with me, when I put on righteousness and it cloathed me, when my glory was fresh in me! when I remember these things, my soul is poured out within me.*

2.

Is thy obedience to the commands of Christ, and motions to duty, as free and cheerful as they were wont to be? Call to mind, my soul, the times when thou wast born down the stream of love to every duty, if the Spirit did but whisper to thee, saying, *Seek my face*, how did my spirit eccho to his calls? saying, *Thy face Lord will I seek*, Psal. 27. 8. If God had any work to be done, how readily did I offer my service? Here am I Lord, send me. My soul made me as the chariots of *Aminadab*; love oyled the wheels of my affections, and *his commandments were not grievous*, 1 Joh. 5. 3. *Non tardat unctis*

nulla rota. There were no such quarrellings with the command, no such excuses and delayes as there are now. No, such was my love to Christ, and delight to do his will, that I could no more keep back my self from duty, than a man that's carryed away in a crowd.

Or lastly, tell me, O my soul, dost thou bemoan thy self, or grieve so tenderly for sin, and for grieving the holy Spirit of God, as thou wast wont to do? When formerly I had fallen by the hand of a temptation, how was I wont to lye in tears at the Lord's feet, bemoaning my self? how did I hasten to my closet, and there cry like *Ezra*, Chap. 9. 6. *O my God, I am ashamed, and blush to look up unto thee*, How did I sigh and weep before him, and like *Ephraim*, smite upon my thigh, saying, *What have I done*? Ah my soul! how didst thou work, strive, and cast about, how to recover thy self again? hast thou orgotten, how thou wouldst sometimes look up and sigh bitterly; Ah! what a God have I provoked? what love and goodness have I abused? sometimes look in, and weep, Ah! what motions did I withstand? what a good spirit have I grieved? Ah! my soul thou wouldst have abhorr'd thy self, thou couldst never have born it, had thy heart been as stupid and as relentless then as now. If ever a poor soul had reason to dissolve it self into tears for its sad relapses, I have.

2. A supporting Reflection.

But yet mourn not, O my soul, as one without hope. Remember, *There is hope in* Israel *concerning this thing*. As low as thy condition is, it is not desperate, it is not a disease that scorns a Remedy; many a man that hath been stretcht out for dead, hath revived again, and lived many a comfortable day in the world; many a tree that hath cast both leaf and fruit, by the skill of a prudent Husbandman, hath been recovered again, and made both flourishing and fruitful. Is it not easier think'st thou, to recover a languishing man to health, than a dead man to life? and yet this God did for me, *Eph.* 2. 1. Is any thing too hard for the Lord? *Though my soul draw nigh to the pit, and my life to the destroyers, yet he can send me a messenger, one among a thousand, that shall declare to me my uprightness; then shall he deliver me from going down into the pit,*

my flesh shall be fresher than a childes, and I shall return to the dayes of my youth, Job 33. 21. Though my flouriſh, and much of my fruit too be gone, and I am a withering tree; yet as long as the root of the matter is in me, there is more hope of ſuch a poor decayed withered tree, than of the hypocrite that wants ſuch a root, in all his glory and bravery. His Sun ſhall ſet, and never riſe again; but I live in expectation of a ſweet morning, after this dark night.

Rouze up therefore, O my ſoul, ſet thy faith a work on Chriſt for quickning grace, for he hath life in himſelf, and quickens whomſoever he will, *Joh.* 7. 38. Stir up that little which remains, *Rev.* 3. 2. Haſt thou not ſeen lively flames proceed from glimmering and dying ſparks, when carefully collected and blown up? get amongſt the moſt lively and quickning Chriſtians; *as iron ſharpens iron, ſo will theſe ſet an edge upon thy dull affections*, Prov. 27. 17. Acts 18. 15. But above all, cry mightily to the Lord for quickning, he will not deſpiſe thy cry. The moans of a diſtreſſed child, work upon the bowels of a tender father. And be ſure to keep within thy view, the great things of eternity, which are ready to be revealed; live in the believing and ſerious contemplations of them, and be dead if thou canſt. 'Tis true, thou haſt reaſon enough from thy condition, to be for ever humbled; but no reaſon at all from thy God, to be in the leaſt diſcouraged.

The *Poem.*

(1) Joh. 15. 1.
(2) 1. Cor. 3. 9.

THou art the (1) Husbandman, and I
A worthleſs plot of (2) Husbandry.
Whom ſpecial love did ne'retheleſs
Divide (3) from natures wilderneſs.
Then did the (4) Sun-ſhine of thy face,
And ſweet (5) illapſes of thy grace
Like (6) *April* ſhowers, and warming gleams
Diſtil its dews, reflect its beams.

(3) Pſa. 4. 3.
(4) Job 29. 3, 4.
(5) Hoſ. 14. 5, 6
(6) Hoſ. 6. 3.

My

My dead (7) affections then were green,
And hopeful (8) buds on them were seen:
These into duties soon were (9) turn'd
In which my heart within me (10) burn'd.
O halcyon dayes! thrice happy state!
Each place was (1) *Bethel*, heavens gate.
What sweet discourse! what heavenly (2) talk!
Whilst with thee I did daily (3) walk!
Mine eyes o'reflow, my heart doth (4) sink;
As oft as on those dayes I think.
For (5) strangeness now is got between
My God and me, as may be seen
By what is (6) now, and what was then;
'Tis just as if I were (7) two men.
My fragrant branches (8) blasted be,
No fruits like those that I can see.
Some (9) Canker-worm lyes at my root,
Which (1) fades my leaves, destroyes my fruit.
My soul is (2) banished from thy sight,
For this it (3) mourneth day and night.
Yet why dost thou (4) desponding lye?
With (5) *Jonah* cast a backward eye.
Sure in thy God help may be had.
There's precious (6) balm in *Gilead*.
That God that made me spring at first,
When I was barren, and (7) accurst,
Can much more easily (8) restore
My soul to what it was before.
'Twas (9) *Haman's* (1) *Job's* (2) and *David's* case,
Yet all recover'd were by grace.
A word, a (3) smile on my poor soul;
Will make it perfect, sound, and whole.
A (4) glance of thine hath soon dissolv'd
A soul in sin, and grief involv'd.
Lord, if thou, (5) canst not work the cure,
I am contented to endure.

(7) Jer. 2. 3.
(8) Cant. 7. 12.
(9) Acts 9. 11.
(10) Lu. 24. 32
(1) Gen. 28. 16, 17.
(2) Exod. 34. 29.
(3) Gen. 6. 7.
(4) Psa. 42. 6.
(5) Cant. 5. 6.
(6) Rev. 2. 5.
(7) 2 Chr. 17. 3.
(8) Psa. 102. 4.
(9) Isa. 59. 2.
(1) Isa. 64. 6.
(2) Psal. 88. 6, 14.
(3) Psal. 77. 2.
(4) Psa. 42. 11.
(5) Jon 2. 4.
(6) Jer. 8. 22.
(7) Ezc. 16. 4.
(8) Psa. 23. 3.
(9) Psa. 88.
(1) Job 14.
(2) Psa. 30.
(3) Psa. 80. 3.
(4) Luk 22. 61, 62.
(5) Jer. 22. 19.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Upon the uncurableneſs of ſome bad ground.

No skill can mend the miry ground, and ſure
Some ſouls the Goſpel leaves as paſt a cure.

OBSERVATION.

ALthough the induſtry and skill of the Husbandman can make ſome ground that was uſeleſs and bad, good for tillage or paſture, and improve that which was barren, and by his coſt and pains make one Acre worth ten; yet ſuch is the nature of ſome rocky or miry ground, where the water ſtands, and there is no way to cleanſe it, that it can never be made fruitful. The Husbandman is fain to let it alone, as an incurable piece of waſte and worthleſs ground; and though the Sun and clouds ſhed their influences on it, as well as upon better Land, yet that doth not at all mend it. Nay, the more ſhowers it receives, the worſe it proves. For theſe do no way fecundate or improve it; nothing thrives there, but worthleſs flags and ruſhes.

APPLICATION.

MAny alſo there are under the Goſpel, who are given over by God to judical blindneſs, hardneſs of heart, a reprobate ſenſe, and perpetual barrenneſs; ſo that how excellent ſoever the means are which they enjoy, and how efficacious ſoever, to the converſion, edification and ſalvation of others; yet they ſhall never do their ſouls good, *Ezek.* 47. 9, 11. *Every thing whereſoever the River comes ſhall live, but the miry places thereof, and the marſhes thereof ſhall never be healed, but be given to ſalt*; (i. e.) given to an obſtinate and everlaſting barrenneſs. Compare *Deut.* 9. 23. By theſe waters, ſaith judicious Mr. *Strong*, underſtand the doctrine of the Goſpel; as *Rev.* 21. 2. a River of water of life, clear as Chriſtal.

Spiritual barrenneſs, p 8.

Chriſtal. *Hic fluvius eſt uberima doctrina Chriſti*, ſaith Mr. *Brightman*. This River is the moſt fruitful doctrine of Chriſt, yet theſe waters do not heal the miry mariſh places, (*i. e.*) men that live unfruitfully under Ordinances, who are compared to miry and mariſh places in three reſpects.

(1) In miry places the water hath not free paſſage, but ſtands and ſettles there. So it is with theſe barren ſouls; therefore the *Apoſtle* prayes, that the Goſpel may run and be glorified, 2 *Theſ.* 3. 1. The word is ſaid to run, when it meets with no ſtop, *Cum libere propagatur*, when it is freely propagated and runs through the whole man; when it meets with no ſtop either in the mouth of the ſpeaker, or hearts of the hearers, as it doth in theſe.

(2) In a miry place, the earth and water is mixt together; this mixture makes mire. So when the truths of God do mix with the corruptions of men, that they either hold ſome truths, and yet live in their luſts, or elſe when men do make uſe of the truths of God to juſtifie and plead for their ſins. Or,

(3) When as in a miry place, the longer the water ſtands in it, the worſe it grows; ſo the longer men abide under Ordinances, the more filthy and polluted they grow: Theſe are the miry places that cannot be healed, their diſeaſe is incurable, deſperate.

O this is a ſad caſe, and yet very common! Many perſons are thus given over; as incorrigible and hopeleſs, *Rev.* 22. 11 *Let him that is filthy, be filthy ſtill.* Jer. 6. 29. *Reprobate ſilver ſhall men call them, for the Lord hath rejected them.* Iſa. 6. *Go make the heart of this people fat, their ears dull*, &c.

Chriſt executes by the Goſpel that curſe upon many ſouls, which he denounced againſt the fig-tree, *Mat.* 21. 19. *Let no fruit grow on thee henceforth for ever, and immediately the fig-tree withered away.* To be given up to ſuch a condition, is a fearful judgment indeed, a curſe with a witneſs; the ſum of all plagues, miſeries and judgments, a fatal ſtroke at the root it ſelf. It's a wo to have a bad heart, (ſaith one) but it's the depth of wo, to have a heart that ſhall never be made better. To be barren under the Goſpel is a ſore judgment, but to

have

have that *pertinax sterilitas*, a pertinacious barrenness; this is to be twice dead, and pluckt up by the root, as *Jude* speaks.

And to shew you the woful and miserable state and plight of such men, let the following particulars be weighed. (1) Its a stroke at the soul it self, an inward spiritual judgement; and by how much the more inward and spiritual any judgment is, by so much the more dreadful and lamentable. As soul-mercies, are the best of mercies; so, soul-judgements, are the saddest of all judgments. If it were but a temporal-stroke upon the body, the loss of an eye, an ear, a hand, a foot, though in it self it would be a considerable loss; yet it were nothing to this. *Omnia Deus dedit duplicia*, saith *Chrysostom*) speaking of bodily members; God hath given men double members, two eyes, if one be lost, the other supplies its wants; two hands, two ears, two feet, that the failing of one, may be supplyed by the help of the other; *animam vero unam*; but one soul, if that perish, there is not another to supply its loss. The soul, saith a *Heathen*, is the man, that which is seen is not the man. The Apostle calls the body, a vile body, *Phil.* 3. 21. and so it is compared with the soul; and *Daniel* calls it the *Sheath*, which is but a contemptible thing to the sword, which is in it. O it were far better that many bodies perish, than one soul; that every member were made the seat, and subject of the most exquisite torture, than such a judgment should fall upon the soul.

Οὐκ ἔστιν ἄνθρωπος τὸ ὁρώμενον. *Plato.*

(2) It's the severest stroke God can inflict upon the soul in this life, to give it up to barrenness; because it cuts off all hopes, frustrates all means, nothing can be a blessing to him. If one come from the dead, if Angels should descend from heaven to preach to him; there is no hope of him. If God shut up a man, who can open? *Job.* 12. 14. As there was none found in heaven or earth, that could open the seals of that book, *Rev.* 5. 5. so is there no opening by the hand of the most able and skilful Ministry, those seals of hardness, blindness and unbelief, thus impressed upon the spirit. Whom justice so locks up, mercy will never let out. This is that which makes up the *Anathema Maranatha*, 1 Cor. 16. 22.

which

which is the dreadfulleſt curſe in all the book of God, accurſed till the Lord come.

(3) 'Tis the moſt indiſcernable ſtroke to themſelves, that can be, and by that ſo much the more deſperate. Hence there is ſaid to be poured out upon them the ſpirit of ſlumber, *Iſa.* 29. 10. *The Lord hath poured out upon you the ſpirit of deep ſleep, and hath cloſed your eyes. Montanus* renders it, The Lord hath mingled upon you the ſpirit of deep ſleep. And ſo it is an alluſion to a ſoporiferous Medicine mingled, and made up of *opium* and ſuch like ſtupifactive ingredients, which caſts a man into ſuch a dead ſleep, that do what you will to him, he feels, he knows it not. *Make their eyes heavy, and their ears dull; leſt they ſhould ſee, and hear, and be converted,* Iſa. 6. 9, 10. This is the heart which cannot repent, which is ſpoken of, *Rom.* 2. 5. For men are not ſenſible at all of this judgment, they do not in the leaſt ſuſpect it, and that is their miſery. Though they be curſed trees which ſhall never bear any fruit to life, yet many times they bear abundance of other fair and pleaſant fruits to the eye, excellent gifts and rare indowments? and theſe deceive and undo them. *Mat.* 7. 22. *We have prophecyed in thy name*; this makes the wound deſperate, that there is no finding of it, no probe to ſearch it.

(4) 'Tis a ſtroke that cuts off from the ſoul all the comfort and ſweetneſs of Religion. A man may pray, hear, and confer, but all thoſe duties are dry ſtalks unto him, which yield no meat, no ſolid ſubſtantial nutriment; ſome common touches upon the affections he may ſometimes find in duty, the melting voice or Rhetorick of the Preacher may perhaps ſtrike his natural affections, as another Tragical ſtory pathetically delivered may do; but to have any real communion with God in Ordinances, any diſcoveries or views of the beauty of the Lord in them, that he cannot have; for theſe are the ſpecial effects and operations of the Spirit, which are alwayes reſtrained.

God hath ſaid to ſuch, as he did to them, *Gen.* 6. 3. *My ſpirit ſhall no longer ſtrive with them*; and then what ſweetneſs is there in Ordinances? What is the Word ſeparated from

the Spirit, but a dead Letter? it's the Spirit that quickens 2 *Cor.* 3. 2. Friend, thou muſt know that the Goſpel works not like *a natural cauſe* upon thoſe that hear it; if ſo, the effect would alwayes follow, unleſs miraculouſly ſtopt and hindred; but it works like *a moral inſtituted cauſe*, whoſe efficacy and ſucceſs depends upon the arbitrary concurrence of the Spirit with it. *The wind blows where it liſteth, ſo is every one that is born of the ſpirit*, Joh. 3. 8. *Of his own will begat he us by the word of truth.* Ordinances are as the pool of *Bethesda*, which had its healing vertue only when the *Angel* moved the waters; but the Spirit never moves ſavingly upon the waters of Ordinances, for the healing of theſe ſouls, how many years ſoever they lye by them. Though others feel a Divine power in them, yet they ſhall not. As the men that travelled with *Paul*, when Chriſt appeared to him from heaven, they ſaw the light, but heard not the voice, which he heard to ſalvation: So it is with theſe, they ſee the Miniſters, hear the words, which are words of ſalvation to others, but not ſo to them. Concerning theſe miſerable ſouls, we may ſigh and ſay to Chriſt, as *Martha* did concerning her brother *Lazarus*; Lord, if thou hadſt been here, in this Sermon, or in this prayer, this ſoul had not remained dead. But here is the woe that lyes upon him, God is departed from the means, and none can help him.

(5) 'Tis ſuch a ſtroke upon the ſpirit of man, as is a fearful ſign of his eternal reprobation. 'Tis true, we cannot poſitively ſay of a man in this life, he is a reprobate, one that God will never ſhew mercy to; but yet there are ſome probable marks of it upon ſome men in this world, and they are of a trembling conſideration where-ever they appear? of which this is one of the ſaddeſt, 2 *Cor.* 4. 3. *If our Goſpel be hid 'tis hid to thoſe that are loſt, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not; leſt the light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them.* So *Act.* 13. 48. *As many as were ordained unto eternal life believed. Ye believe not, becauſe ye are not of my ſheep*, Joh. 10. 26. And again, *Mat.* 13. 11. *To you it is given to know the myſteries of the Kingdom, but to them it is not given.* There cannot

not be a more dreadful Character of a person marked out for wrath, than to continue under the Ordinances, as the Rocks and miry places do under the natural influences of heaven. What blessed opportunities had *Judas*? he was under Christ's own Ministry, he often heard the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth; he was night and day in his company, yet never the better; and why? because he was *the son of perdition*; that is, a man appointed to destruction and wrath.

(6) And lastly, to add no more. 'Tis such a stroke of God upon the souls of men, as immediately foreruns hell and damnation, *Heb.* 6. 8. *But that which beareth thorns and bryars is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burnt.* So that look as some Saints in this world, have had a prelibation or foretaste of heaven, which the Scripture calls *the earnest of the Spirit*; so this is a precursor of hell, a sign of wrath at the door. We may say of it, as 'tis said of the pale horse in the *Revelation*, that hell follows it. *If a man abide not in me*, (saith Christ, *John* 15. 6.) *he is cast forth as a branch and withered*; which is the very state of these barren, cursed souls. And what follows? Why, saith he, men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. Lo, this is the vengeance which the Gospel executes upon this barren ground.

REFLECTIONS.

Well then, blessed be God that made me feel the saving power of the Gospel. O, let God be exalted for ever for this mercy! that how defective soever I am in common gifts, though I have a dull understanding, a leaking memory, a stammering tongue; yet I have felt, and do feel the power of the Gospel upon my heart. I bless thee (my God,) that although I labour under many spiritual infirmities, yet I am not sick of this incurable disease. I have given thee indeed just cause to inflict and execute this dreadful curse upon me also, but thou hast not dealt with me after my deserts; but according to the riches of thy mercy. Some little fruit I

1 The sincere souls Reflection.

bring forth, and what it is, is by vertue of my union with *Jesus Christ*, Rom. 7. 4. And this hath more in it as to my comfort, than all the glittering gifts and splendid performances of the most glorious hypocrite can yield to him. If I might have my choice (saith one) I would chuse and prefer the most despicable and sordid work of a rustick *Christian*, before all the victories of *Alexander* and triumphs of *Cæsar*. *Blessed therefore be the Lord who hath abounded unto me in all spiritual blessings, in heavenly things in Christ Jesus.*

I cannot remember a Sermon as another can, but blessed be God that I am able to savour it, and feel it; that I have an heart to love, and a will to obey, all that God discovers to be my duty.

1. The formal Professors Reflection.

O, then, how little cause have I to make my boast of Ordinances, and glory in my external priviledges, who never bear spiritual fruit under them? if I well consider my condition, there is matter of *trembling*, and not of *glorying* in these things. It may be, while I have been glorying in them, and lifting up my secure heart upon them, the Lord hath been secretly blasting my soul under them, and insensibly executing this horrible curse by them. Shall I boast, that with *Capernaum*, *I am lifted up to heaven*, since I may with her at last be cast down to hell? And if so, Lord, what a hell will my hell be? it will be more tollerable for *Sodom* and *Gomorrha* than for me. It drew tears from the eyes of *Christ*, when he was looking upon *Jerusalem*, under the same consideration that I doubt I have cause to look upon my own soul, *Luke* 19. 41. *He wept over it, saying, if thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes.* So long I have been a Hearer, a Professor of the Gospel, so many years I have injoyed its distinguishing Ordinances, but have they not been all dry and empty things to me? hath not the spirit of formality acted me in them? have not self ends, and worldly respects lain at the bottom of my best duties? have not my discourses in communion with the Saints, been Trade words, speaking what I have learnt, but not felt? sad is my condition now, but it would be desperate and irrecoverable, should'st thou execute this curse upon me.

And

And what may I think of my condition? Lord, I acknowledg my unprofitableness under the means hath been shameful; and this hath made my condition doubtful. I have often trembled for fear, lest my root had been blasted by such a curse; but if so, whence is his trembling? whence these fears and sorrows about it? doth such fruit grow in that soyl which thou hast cursed? I am told but now, that on whom this judgment falls, to them thou givest an heart that cannot repent. Lord, I bless thee for these evidences of freedom from the curse; for the fruits of fear, sorrow, and holy jealousie. The Laws of men spare for the fruits sake, and wilt not thou spare me also my God, if there be found in me a blessing in the bud, *Isa.* 65. 8.

3. The less fruitful Christians Reflection.

Romana leges pœnam prægnanti differunt. Chrysost.

To conclude, what a serious Reflection should this occasion in every dispenser of the Gospel? how should he say when he goes to preach the Gospel, I am now going to preach that word, which is to be *a savour of life or death to these souls*, upon how many of my poor Hearers may the curse of perpetual barrenness be executed this day! O how should such a thought melt his heart into compassion over them, and make him beg hard, and plead earnestly with God for a better issue of the Gospel than this upon them?

4. The Gospel Preachers Reflection.

The *Poem.*

You that besides your pleasant fruitful fields,
Have useless bogs, and rocky ground that yields
You no advantage, nor doth quit your cost,
But all your pains and charges on them's lost,
Hearken to me, I'le teach you how to get
More profit by them, than if they were set
At higher Rents than what your Tenants pay
For your most fertile Lands; and here's the way
Think when you view them, why the Lord hath chose
These, as the (1) Emblems to decipher those

That

(1) Ezc. 47. 11

That under Gospel-grace grow worse and (2) worse;
For means are fruitless; where the Lord doth (3) curse.
Sweet showers descend, the Sun his beams reflects
On both (4) alike; but not with like effects.
Observe, and see how after the sweet showers
The grass and corn (5) revive; the fragrant (6) flowers
Shoot forth their beauteous heads, the valleys (7) sing,
All fresh, and green as in the verdent spring,
But rocks are barren still, and (8) bogs are so;
Where nought but flags, (9) and worthless rushes grow.
Upon these marish grounds there lyes this curse,
The more rain falls; by so much more the worse.
Even so the (1) dews of grace, that sweetly fall,
From Gospel (2) clouds, are not (3) a like to all.
The gracious soul doth (4) germinate and bud,
But to the Reprobate it doth (5) no good.
He's like the withered (6) fig-tree, void of fruit;
A fearful curse hath smote his very (7) root.
The heart's made fat, the (9) eyes with blindness seal'd;
The piercingst truths the Gospel ere reveal'd,
Shall be to him but as the Sun and rain
Are to obdurate rocks: (10) fruitless and vain.
Be this your meditation when you walk
By rocks, and fenny grounds, thus learn to talk
With your own souls: and let it make you fear
Lest that's your case that is described here.
This is the best improvement you can make.
Of such bad ground: good soul, I pray thee take
Some pains about them; though they barren be,
Thou seest how they may yield sweet fruits to thee.

(1) 1 Tim. 3. 13.
(3) Heb. 6. 8.
(4) Mat. 5. 45.
(5) 1 Sam. 23. 4
(6) Cant 2. 12
(7) Psa. 65. 13.
(8) Eze. 47. 11
(9) Job 8. 11.
(1) Deut. 22. 2.
(2) Isa. 55. 6.
(3) 2 Cor. 2. 16.
(4) Psa. 92. 13.
(5) Isa. 6. 9, 10.
(6) Mat. 21. 20.
(7) Isa. 5. 24.
(9) Isa. 6. 10.
(10) Luk. 8. 14 Jer. 17. 5, 6.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

The Plowman guides his plough with care and skill.
So doth the Spirit, in sound conviction still.

Upon the plowing of Cornland.

OBSERVATION.

IT requires not only strength, but much skill and judgment, to manage and guide the plow. The Hebrew word which we translate to plow, signifies to be intent, as an Artificer is about some curious piece of work. The plow must neither go too shallow nor too deep in the earth; it must not indent the ground by making crooked furrows, nor leap and make baulks in good ground; but be guided as to a just depth of earth, so to cast the furrow in a straight line, that the floor or surface of the field may be made plain. As it is *Isa.* 28. 25. And hence that expressing, *Luke* 9. 62. *He that puts his hand to the plow, and looks back, is not fit for the kingdom of heaven.* The meaning is, that as he that plows, must have his eyes alwayes forward, to guide and direct his hand in casting the furrows straight and even; (for his hand will be quickly out when his eye is off). So he that heartily resolves for heaven, must addict himself wholly and intently to the business of Religion, and not have his mind intangled with the things of this world, which he hath left behind him; whereby it appears, that the right management of the plow, requires as much skill as strength.

חָרַשׁ

APPLICATION.

THis Observation in *nature*, serves excellently to shadow forth this proposition in *Divinity*. That the work of the Spirit in convincing and humbling the heart of a sinner, is a work wherein much of the wisdom, as well as power of God is discovered. The work of repentance and saving contri-

Glassius Rhet. sacra, p. 300.

Cavill in Job, Chap. 4. v. 8.

contrition, is set forth in Scripture by this Metaphor of plowing, *Jer.* 4. 3. *Hos.* 10. 12. *Plow up your fallow ground*; that is, be convinced, humbled, and broken hearted for sin. And the resemblance betwixt both these works, appears in the following particulars.

(1) 'Tis a hard and difficult work to plow, it's reckoned one of the painfullest manual labours. It is also a very hard thing to convince and humble the heart of a secure, stout, and proud sinner, indurate in wickedness. What *Luther* saith of a dejected soul; *That it is as easie to raise the dead as to comfort such a one.* The same I may say of the secure, confident sinner. 'Tis as easie to rend the rocks, as to work saving contrition upon such a heart. *Citius ex pumice aquam*; all the melting language and earnest intreaties of the Gospel, cannot urge such a heart to shed a tear: Therefore it's called a heart of stone, *Ezek.* 36. 26. a firm rock, *Amos* 6. 12. *Shall horses run upon the rock? will one plow there with oxen?* yet when the Lord comes in the power of his Spirit, these rocks do rend and yield to the power of the word.

Κατενύγησαν *punctim cedo pungendo penetro,*

(2) The plow pierces deep into the bosom of the earth, makes (as it were) a deep gash or wound in the heart of it. So doth the Spirit upon the hearts of sinners, he pierces their very souls by conviction, *Act.* 2. 37. *When they heard this, they were pricked* (or pierced point blanck) *to the heart. Then the word divides the soul and spirit, Heb.* 4. 12. It comes upon the conscience with such pinching dilemma's, and tilts the sword of conviction so deep into their souls, that there is no stenching the bloud, no healing this wound, till Christ himself come and undertake the cure. *Hæret lateri lethalis arundo*; this barbed arrow cannot be pulled out of their hearts by any but the hand that shot it in. Discourse with such a soul about his troubles, and he will tell you, that all the sorrows that ever he had in this world, loss of estate, health, children, or whatever else, are but flea-bitings to this; this swallows up all other troubles. See how that Christian *Niobe*, *Luke* 7. 38. is dissolved into tears. *Now deep calleth unto deep at the noise of his water spouts, when the waves and billows of God go over the soul.* Spiritual sorrows are deep, waters in which

the

the ſtouteſt and moſt magnanimous ſoul would ſink and drown, did not *Jeſus Chriſt* by a ſecret and ſupporting hand, hold it up by the chin.

(3.) The plow rends the earth in parts and pieces, which before was united, and makes thoſe parts hang looſe, which formerly lay cloſs. Thus doth the Spirit of conviction rend in ſunder the heart, and its moſt beloved luſts, *Joel.* 2. 13. *Rent your hearts, and not your garments*; that is, rather then your garments; for the ſenſe is comparative, though the expreſſion be negative. And this rending implyes, not only acute pain; fleſh cannot be rent aſunder without anguiſh, nor yet only force and violence; the heart is a ſtubborn and knotty piece; and will not eaſily yield, but it alſo implies a diſunion of parts united: as when a garment, or the earth, or any continuous body is rent; thoſe parts are ſeparated which formerly cleaved together. Sin and the ſoul were glewed faſt together before, there was no parting of them, they would as ſoon part with their *lives*, as with their *luſts*; but now when the heart is rent for them truly, it is alſo rent from them everlaſtingly, *Ezek.* 7. 15. to 19.

(4) The plow turns up, and diſcovers ſuch things as lay hid in the boſom of the earth before, and were covered under a fair green ſurface, from the eyes of men. Thus when the Lord plows up the heart of a ſinner by conviction, then the ſecrets of his heart are made manifeſt, 2 *Cor.* 14. 24, 25. the moſt ſecret and ſhameful ſins will then out; for *the word of God is quick and powerful, ſharper than any two edged ſword, piercing even to the dividing of the ſoul and ſpirit, the joints and marrow, and is a quick diſcerner of the thoughts, and ſecret intents of the heart*, *Heb.* 4. 12. It makes the fire burn inwardly, ſo that the ſoul hath no reſt till confeſſion give a vent to trouble. Fain would the ſhuffling ſinner conceal and hide his ſhame, but the word follows him through all his ſinful ſhifts, and brings him at laſt to be his own, both accuſer, witneſs and judge.

(5.) The work of the plow is but *opus ordinabile*: a preparative work in order to fruit. Should the Husbandman plow his ground never ſo often, yet if the ſeed be not caſt in

and quickned, in vain is the Harveſt expected. Thus conviction alſo is but a preparative to a farther work upon the ſoul of a ſinner. If it ſtick there, and go no farther, it proves but an abortive or untimely birth. Many have gone thus far, and there they have ſtuck; they have been like a field plowed, but not ſowed, which is a matter of trembling conſideration; for hereby their ſin is greatly aggravated, and their eternal miſery ſo much the more increaſed. O when a poor damned creature ſhall with horror reflect upon himſelf in hell, how neer was I once under ſuch a Sermon, to converſion? My ſins were ſet in order before me, my conſcience awakened and terrified with the guilt of them; many purpoſes and reſolves I had then to turn to God, which had they been perfected by anſwerable executions, I had never come to this place of torment; but there I ſtuck, and that was my eternal undoing. Many ſouls have I known ſo terrified with the guilt of ſin, that they have come roaring under horrors of conſcience to the Preacher; ſo that one would think ſuch a breach had been made betwixt them and ſin, as could never be reconciled; and yet, as angry as they were in that fit with ſin, they have hug'd and imbraced them again.

(6) 'Tis beſt plowing when the earth is prepared and mollified by the ſhowers of rain, then the work goes on ſweetly and eaſily. And never doth the heart ſo kindly melt, as when the Goſpel clouds diſſolve, and the free grace and love of *Jeſus Chriſt* comes ſweetly ſhowring down upon it; then it relents and mourns ingenuouſly, *Ezek.* 16. 63. That *thou mayeſt remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more becauſe of thy ſhame, when I am pacified towards thee for all that thou haſt done.* So it was with that poor Penitent, *Luke* 7. 38. when the Lord Jeſus had diſcovered to her the ſuper-abounding riches of his grace, in the pardon of her manifold abominations; her heart melted within her, ſhe waſhed the feet of *Chriſt* with tears. And indeed, there is as much difference betwixt the tears which are forced by the terrors of the Law, and thoſe which are extracted by the grace of the Goſpel, as there is betwixt thoſe of a condemned malefactor, who weeps to conſider the miſery he is under

der, and those of a pardoned malefactor, that receives his pardon at the foot of the ladder, and is melted by the mercy and clemency of his gracious Prince towards him.

(7) The plow-kills those rank weeds which grew in the field, turns them up by the roots, buries and rots them. So doth saving conviction kill sin at the root, makes the soul sick of it, begets indignation in the heart against it, 2 *Cor.* 7. 11. The word there signifies the rising of the stomack, and being angry even unto sickness; religious wrath is the fiercest, wrath, now the soul cannot endure sin, trembles at it. *I find a woman more bitter than death* (saith penitent *Solomon*) *Eccl.* 7. 26. Conviction like a surfet, makes the soul to loath what it formerly loved and delighted in. Ἀγανακτησιν

(8) That field is not well plowed, where the plow jumps and skips over good ground, and makes baulks, it must turn up the whole field alike; and that heart is not savingly convicted where any lust is spared and left untouched. Saving Conviction extends it self to all sins, not only to sin in general, with this cold confession, *I am a sinner*; but to the particulars of sin, yea, to the particular circumstances and aggravations of time; place, manner, occasions, thus and thus have I done; to the sin of *nature*, as well as *practise*, *behold I was shapen in iniquity*, *Psal.* 51. 5. There must be no *baulking* of any sin; the sparing of one sin, is a sure argument thou art not truly humbled for any sin. So far is the convinced soul from a studious concealment of a beloved sin, that it weeps over that, more than over any other actual sin.

(9) New ground is much more easily plowed than that which by long lying out of tillage, is more consolidated and clung together, by deep rooted thorns and brambles, which render it difficult to the Plowman. This old ground is like an old sinner, that hath lain a long time hardening under the means of grace. O the difficulty of convincing such a person! Sin hath got such rooting in his heart, he is so habituted to the reproofs and calls of the word, that few such are wrought upon. How many young persons are called, to one obdurate, inveterate sinner? I do not say but God may call home such a soul at the eleventh hour; but I may say of these,

compared with others, as *Solomon* speaks, *Eccles.* 7. 28. *One man among a thousand have I found*, &c. Few that have long resisted the Gospel, that come afterwards to feel the saving efficacy thereof.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The true Converts Reflection.

O Grace, for ever to be admired! that God should send forth his Word and Spirit to plow up my hard and stony heart! yea, mine, when he hath left so many of more tender, ingenuous, sweet, and melting tempers without any culture or means of grace. O blessed Gospel! heart dissolving voice! I have felt thine efficacy, I have experienced thy divine and irresistible power; thou art indeed sharper than any two-edged sword, and woundest to the heart; but thy wounds are the wounds of a friend. All the wounds thou hast made in my soul, were so many doors opened to let in Christ; all the blows thou gavest my conscience, were but to beat off my soul from sin, which I embraced and had retained to my everlasting ruin, hadst thou not separated them and me. O wise and merciful Physitian, thou didst indeed bind me with cords of conviction and sorrow; but it was only to cut out that stone in my heart, which had killed me if it had continued there. Oh, how did I struggle and oppose thee, as if thou hadst come with the sword of an enemy, rather than the lance and probe of a skilful and tender-hearted Physitian? Blessed be the day wherein my sin was discovered and imbittered! O happy sorrows which prepared for such matchless joyes! O blessed hand which turned my salt waters into pleasant wine! and after many pangs and sorrows of soul didst bring forth the man-child of deliverance and peace.

2. The stubborn hearts Reflection.

But O, what a Rock of Adamant is this heart of mine! that never yet was wounded and savingly pierced for sin by the terrors of the Law, or melting voice of the Gospel! long have I sate under the word, but when did I feel a relenting pang? O my soul! my stupified soul! thou hast got an *Antidote* against repentance, but hast thou any against hell? thou canst keep out the sense of sin now, but art thou

able

able to keep off the terrors of the Lord hereafter? if thou couldſt turn a deaf ear to the ſentence of Chriſt in the day of judgment, as eaſily as thou doſt to the intreaties of Chriſt in the day of grace, it were ſomewhat; but ſurely there is no defence againſt that. Ah, fool that I am, to quench theſe convictions, unleſs I knew how to quench thoſe flames they warn me of.

3. The Miſcarrying ſouls Reflection.

And may not I challenge the firſt place among all the mourners in the world, who have loſt all thoſe convictions which at ſeveral times came upon me under the word? I have been often awakened by it, and filled with terrors and tremblings under it; but thoſe troubles have ſoon worn off again, and my heart (like water removed from the fire) return'd to its native coldneſs. Lord, what a diſmal caſe am I in? Many convictions have I choaked and ſtrangled, which it may be ſhall never more be revived, until thou revive them againſt me in judgment. I have been in pangs, and brought forth nothing but wind; my troubles have wrought no deliverance, neither have my luſts fallen before them: my conſcience indeed hath been ſometimes ſick with ſin, yea, ſo ſick as to vomit them up by an external, partial reformation: but then with the dog, have I returned again to my vomit, and now I doubt am given over to an heart that cannot repent. Oh that thoſe travelling pangs could be quickened again! but alas! they are ceaſed. I am like a priſoner eſcaped, and again recovered, whom the Jaylor loads with double irons. Surely, O my ſoul! if thy ſpiritural troubles return not again, they are but gone back, to bring eternal troubles. It is with thee, O my ſoul! as with a man whoſe bones have been broken, and not well ſet; who muſt, (how terrible ſoever it appear to him) endure the pain of breaking and ſetting them again, if ever he be made a ſound man. O that I might rather chuſe to be the object of thy wounding mercy, than of thy ſparing cruelty! if thou plow not up my heart again by compunction, I know it muſt be rent in pieces at laſt by deſperation.

Vhe

The *Poem*.

(1) Iſa. 28. 25, 26.
(2) Mat. 13 5
(3) Mat. 13. 4.
(4) Mat. 13. 38
(5) Act. 2. 37.
(6) 2 Cor. 6. 1.
(7) 1 Cor. 3. 5.
(8) Phil. 1. 6.
(1) Joh. 16. 8.
(2) 1 Theſ. 2. 19.
(3) Luk 15. 11.
(4) 2 Cor. 9, 10, 11.
(5) Mat 13. 6.
(6) 1 Theſ. 1. 5.
(7) Mar. 8. 14.
(8) Heb. 6. 5.
(9) Luk. 8. 14.
(1) Pſa. 126. 6.

THere's (1) skill in plowing, that the Plow man knows,
For if too (2) ſhallow, or too deep he goes;
The ſeed is either buried, or elſe may
To (3) Rooks and Daws become an eaſie prey.
This as a lively Emblem, fitly may
Deſcribe the bleſſed ſpirits work and way:
Whoſe work on ſouls, with this doth ſymbolize;
Betwixt them both, thus the reſemblance lyes.
Souls are the (4) ſoyl, conviction is the (5) plow.
Gods workmen (6) draw, the ſpirit ſhews them how.
He guides the work, and in good ground, doth (7) bleſs
His workmens pains, with ſweet and fair ſucceſs.
The heart prepar'd, he ſcatters, in the ſeed
Which in it's ſeaſon ſprings, no fowl nor weed
Shall pick it up, or choak this ſpringing corn;
Till it be (8) houſed in the heavenly barn.
When thus the (1) ſpirit plows up the fallow ground,
When with ſuch fruits, his ſervants work is (2) crown'd;
Let all the (3) friends of Chriſt, and ſouls ſay now;
As they paſs by theſe fields (4) *God ſpeed the Plow.*
Sometimes this Plow (5) thin, ſhelfy ground doth turn.
That little ſeed which ſprings, the Sun-beams burn.
The reſt uncovered lyes, which fowls devour,
Alas! their hearts were (6) touch'd, but not with power.
The (7) cares and pleaſures of this world have drown'd
The ſeed, before it peep'd above the ground.
Some ſprings indeed, the (8) Scripture ſaith that ſome
Do taſte the powers of the world to come.
Theſe (9) Embroy's never come to timely birth,
Becauſe the ſeed that's ſown wants depth of earth.
Turn up, O God, the bottom of my heart;
And to the ſeed that's ſown, do thou impart
Thy choiceſt bleſſing. Though I (1) weep and mourn;
In this wet ſeed-time; if I may return

With

With sheaves of joy; these fully will reward
My pains, and sorrows, be they ne're so hard.

CHAP. VIII.

The choicest Wheat is still reserv'd for seed,
But gracious principles are choice indeed.

Upon the seed Corn.

OBSERVATION.

HUsbandmen are very careful and curious about their Seed-corn, that it may not only be clean and pure, but the best and most excellent in its kind, *Isa.* 28. 25. *He casteth in the principal Wheat.* If any be more full and weighty than other, that is reserved for Seed. 'Tis usual with Husbandmen to pick and lease their Seed-corn by hand, that they may separate the Cockel and Darnel, and all the lighter and hollow grains from it, wherein they manifest their discretion, for according to the vigour and goodness of the Seed, the fruit and production is like to be.

APPLICATION.

THe choice and principal Seed-corn with which the fields are sowed, after they are prepared for it, doth admirably shadow forth those excellent principles of grace infused into the regenerate soul. Their agreement, as they are both seed, is obvious in the ten following particulars, and their excellency above other principles in seven more.

The earth at first naturally brought forth Corn, and every Seed yielding fruit, without humane industry; but since the curse came upon it, it must be plowed and sowed, or no fruit can be expected. So man at first had all the principles of holiness in his nature, but now they must be infused by regeneration,

ration, or elſe his nature is as void of holineſs as the barren and untilled deſert is of Corn.

2. The earlier the Seed is ſown, the better it is rooted and enabled to endure the aſperities of the Winter; ſo when grace is early infuſed, when nature is ſanctified in the bud, grace is thereby exceedingly advantaged: 'Twas *Timothies* ſingular advantage, that he knew the Scriptures of a child.

3. Froſts and ſnows conduce very much to the well-rooting of the Seed, and makes it ſpread and take root much the better. So do ſanctified afflictions, which uſually the people of God meet with after their calling, and often in their very Seed-time, 1 *Theſ.* 1. 6. *And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction.* But if they have fair weather then, to be ſure they ſhall meet with weather hard enough afterwards, *Heb.* 10. 32. *But call to remembrance the former dayes in which after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions.*

4. When the Seed is caſt into the earth, it muſt be covered up by the harrow; the uſe whereof in Husbandry, is not only to lay a plain floor (as they ſpeak) but to open and let in the Corn to the boſom of the earth, and there cover it up for its ſecurity, from birds that would devour it. Thus doth the moſt wiſe God provide for the ſecurity of that grace, which he at firſt deſſeminated in the hearts of his people. He is as well the finiſher as the Author of their grace, *Heb.* 12. 2. And of this they may be confident, that he that hath begun a good work in them, will perform it unto the day of Chriſt. The care of God over the graces of his people, is like the covering of the ſeed for ſecurity.

5. Seed-corn is in its own nature, of much more value and worth than other Corn; the Husbandman caſts in the principal wheat. So are the ſeeds of grace ſown in the renewed ſoul; for it's called, *The ſeed of God*, 1 Joh. 3. 9. *The Divine nature*, 2 Pet. 1. 4. One dram of grace is far beyond all the glory of this world; its more precious than gold which periſhes, 1 *Pet.* 1. 7. *The price of it is above rubies, and all that thou canſt deſire is not to be compared with it*, Pro. 3. 15.

There

There is a great deal of spirit and vigour in a little Seed, though it be small in bulk, yet it is great in vertue and efficacy. Gracious habits are also vigorous and efficacious things. Such is their efficacy that they overcome the world, 1 *Joh.* 5. 4. *Whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world.* They totally alter and change the person in whom they are. *He that persecuted us in times past, now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed.* They enable the soul to do and suffer great things for God, *Heb.* 11. 33, 34, 35. 6.

The stalk and ear are potentially and virtually in a small grain of Corn. So are all the fruits of obedience which believers afterwards bring forth to God, vertually contained in those habits of seeds of grace. 'Tis strange to consider, that from a mustard-seed (which as Christ saith is the least of all seeds) should grow such great branches, that the birds of the Air may build their nests in them. Surely the heroical and famous acts and atchie vements of the most renowned believers sprang from small beginnings at first, to that eminency and glory. 7.

The fruitfulness of the seed depends upon the Sun and rain, by which they are quickned, as is opened largely in the next Chapter. And the principles of grace in us have as necessary a dependance upon the assisting and exciting grace without us. For though it be true, they are immortal seeds; yet that is not so much from their own strength, as from the promises made to them, and that constant influx from above, by which they are revived and preserved from time to time. 8.

The seed is fruitful in some soyles more than in others, prospers much better, and comes sooner to maturity. So doth grace thrive better, and grow faster in some persons than in others. *Your faith groweth exceedingly*, 2 Thes. 1. 3. *Whilst the things that are in others are ready to die*, Rev. 3. 2. Though no mans heart be naturally a kind soyl to grace, yet doubtless grace is more advantaged in some disposition than in others. 9.

And lastly, their agreement as Seed appears in this, the Seed-corn is scattered into all parts of the field, as proportionably 10.

tionably and equally as may be. So is grace diffus'd into all the faculties, judgment, will, and all the affections, are sowed with these new principles, *The God of peace sanctifie you wholly*, 1 *Thes.* 5. 23.

And thus you see, why principles of grace are called Seed. Now in the next place, (which is the second thing promised and mainly designed in this Chapter,) to shew you the choiceness and excellency of these holy principles with which sanctified souls are embellisht and adorned, and to convince you that true grace excels all other principles, by which other persons are acted, even as the principal wheat doth the chaff, and refuse stuff, I shall here institute a comparison betwixt grace, and the most splendid, common gifts in the world, and its transcendent excellency above them all will evidently appear in the seven following particulars.

1. The most excellent common gifts come out of the common treasury of God's bounty, and that in a natural way They are but the improvement of a mans natural abilities, or (as one calls them) the sparks of nature blown up by the wind of a more benign and liberal education; but principles of grace are of a divine and heavenly original and extraction not educed or raised from nature, but supernaturally infused by the Spirit from on high, *Joh.* 3. 6. *That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit.* When a soul is sanctified by them, *he partakes of the divine nature*, 2 Pet. 1. 4. *is born not of flesh, nor of blood, nor of the will of man, but of God*, *Joh.* 1 13. In this respect they differ from gifts, as the heavenly Manna which was rained down from heaven, differs from common bread, which by pains and industry the earth produces in a natural way.

2. The best natural gifts afford not that sweetness and solid comfort to the soul that grace doth; they are but a dry stalk that affords no meat for a soul to feed on. A man may have an understanding full of light, and an heart void of comfort at the same time; but grace is a fountain of purest living streams of peace and comfort, 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. *Believing we rejoyce with joy unspeakable and full of glory: light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart.* All true pleasures and

and delights are seminally in grace, *Psal.* 97. 11. they are sown for them in these divine and heavenly graces, which are glory in the bud.

3. Gifts adorn the person, but do not secure the soul from wrath. A man may be admired for them among men, and rejected eternall by God. Who can considerately read that sixth Chapter of the *Hebrews*, and not tremble to think in what a forlorn case a soul may be, though set off and accomplisht with the rarest endowments of this kind, *Mat.* 7. 22. We read, that many shall say to *Christ* in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not propheſied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, &c. and yet themselves at last cast out as a prey to Devils. How divinely and rhetorically did a *Balaam* speak and propheſie, *Num.* 23. What rare and excellene parts had the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*? who upon that account were stiled *principes seculi*, the Princes of the world, 1 *Cor.* 2. 8. What profound and excellent parts had the Heathen *Sages* and *Philoſophers*? These things are so far from securing the soul againſt the wrath to come, that they often expose it unto wrath, and are as oyl to increase the eternal burnings; but now gracious principles are the τὰ ἐχωμενα σωτηρίαν, as the Apostle [illegible]m, *Heb.* 6. Things that accompany and have salvation in them, These are the things on which the promises of salvation run; and these treasures are never found but in elect vessels. Glory is by promise assured and made over to him that possesses them. There is but a little point of time, betwixt him and the glorified spirits above. And how inconsiderable a matter is a little time, which contracts and winds up apace? For *now is our salvation neerer than when we believed.* And hence the Scriptures speaks of them as already saved, *Rom.* 8. 24. *We are saved by hope*, because its as sure as if we were in heaven. We are made to sit in heavenly places.

Like a precious stone in a toads head.

4. Gifts may damnifie the person that possesses them; and it may be better in respect of a mans own condition he had never had them. *Knowledge* (saith the Apostle *puffeth up*, 1 *Cor.* 8. 1. maketh the soul proud and flatulent. 'Tis a hard thing to know much, and not to know it too much. The Saints know-

'nowledge is better than the Scholars; for he hath his own heart inſtead of a Commentary to help him. *Ariſtotle* ſaid a little knowledge about heavenly things, though conjectural, is better than much of earthly things, though certain. *The world by wiſdom knew not God* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 1.21.) *i. e.*) their learning hanged in their light, they were too wiſe to ſubmit to the ſimplicity of the Goſpel. The excellent parts of the old Hereticks, did but ſerve to Midwife into the world the monſtrous birth of ſoul-damning hereſies. *Cupit abs te ornari diabolus*, as *Auſtin* ſaid to that ingenious young Scholar; The devil deſires to be adorned by thee. But now grace in it ſelf is not ſubject to ſuch abuſes, it cannot be the proper *univocal cauſe* of any evil effect: It cannot puff up the heart, but alwayes humbles it; nor ſerve the devils deſignes, but ever oppoſes them.

5. Gifts may be given a man for the ſake of others, and not out of love to himſelf, they are but as an execellent diſh of meat which a man ſends to a nurſe, not for her ſake ſo much as for his child that ſucks her. God indeed makes uſe of them to do his children good, the Church is benefited by them, though themſelves are but like Cooks, they prepare excellent diſhes on which the [illegible], and are nouriſhed, though themſelves taſte them not. They *dona miniſtrantia non ſanctificantia*, miniſtring but not ſanctifying gifts, proceeding not from the good will of God to him that hath them, but to thoſe he benefits by them. And oh, what a ſad conſideration will this be one day to ſuch a perſon, to think, I helped ſuch a ſoul to heaven, while I my ſelf muſt lodge in hell?

6 Sin in the raign and power of it, may cohabit with the moſt excellent natural gifts under the ſame roof, I mean in the ſame heart. A man may have the tongue of an *Angel*, and the heart of a *Devil*. The wiſdom of the *Philoſophers* (ſaith *Lactantius*) *non excidit vitia ſed abſcondit*, did not root out, but hide their vices. The learned *Phariſees* were but painted ſepulchers; gifts are but as a fair glove drawn over a foul hand. But now grace is incompatible with ſin in dominion; it purifies the heart, *Act.* 15. 9. cleanſes the conſcience

science. *Heb* 9. 14. crucifies the affections and lusts of the flesh, *Gal.* 5. 24. is not content with the concealment, but ruine of corruptions.

Lastly, Gifts must leave us at last. *Whether there be knowledge, that shall cease. All flesh is grass. and the goodliness of it as the flower of the grass; the grass withers, the flower fadeth, but the word of the Lord abideth for ever*, Isa. 40. 6, 8. Many times they leave a man before death. One knock, if it hit right (as one saith) may make a wise man a fool. But to be sure, they all leave us at death. *Doth not his excellency which is in him, go away? Job* 4. 21. yea, then all natural excellency departs. Death strips the soul of all those splendid ornaments, then the rhetorical tongue is struck Dum; the nimble wit and curious phansie, shall entertain your ears with no more pleasant discourses. *Nunquam jocos dabis*, as *Adrian* said to his departing soul; but grace ascends with the soul into eternity, and there receives its perfection and accomplishment. Gifts take their leave of the soul, as *Orpha* did of *Naomi*; but grace saith, then as *Ruth*, where thou goest I will go, and *where thou lodgest I will lodge and nothing shall separate thee and me* Now put all this together, and then judge whether the Apostle [illegible]holyes, when he said, *Covet earnestly the best gifts, and yet I shew unto you a more excellent way*, 1 Cor. 12. *ult.* And thus you have the choiceness of these principles also. 7.

REFLECTIONS.

The gracious souls Reflection.

The lines ars fallen to me in a pleasant place, may the gracious soul say. How defective so ever I am in gifts, yet blessed be the Lord, who hath sown the seeds of true grace in my heart. What though I am not famed and honoured among men, let it suffice me that I am precious in the eyes of the Lord. Though he hath not abounded to me in gifts of nature, *yet blessed be the God and father of my Lord Jesus Christ, who hath abounded to me in all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus*, Eph. 1. 3. Is not a true jewel, though spurn'd in the dirt, more precious than a false one, though set

set in gold? why art thou troubled, O my soul, for the want of these things which reprobates may have? and art not rather admiring and blessing God for those things which none but the darlings and favourites of heaven can have? is not an ounce of pure gold more valuable than many pounds of guilded brass? what though the dews of *Helicon* descend not upon my *head*, if in the mean time the sweet influences of *Sion* fall upon my *heart*? O my God! how much soever others are elated by the light of their knowledge, I have cause with humility to adore thee for the heavenly heat with which thou hast warmed my affections.

The deceived souls Reflection.

Pause a while my soul upon this point. With what seed is my heart sown, and of what kind are those things wherein I excel others? are they indeed special seeds of grace, or common gifts and naturall excellencies? If the latter, little cause have I to pride my self in them, were they ten thousand times more then they are. If these things be indeed the things that accompany salvation, the seed of God, the true and real work of grace, Then (1) how comes it to pass, that I never found any throws or travelling pangs in the production of them? Its affirmed, and generally acknowledged, that the new creature is never brought forth without such pains, and compunctions of heart, *Act.* 2. 37. I have indeed often felt an aking *head*, whilst I have read and studied to increase my knowledge; but when did I feel an aking *heart* for sin? Oh, I begin to suspect, that it is not right. Yea, (2) and my suspicion increases whiles I consider that grace is of an humbling nature, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. Lord, how have I been elated by my gifts and valued my self above what was meet? O how have I delighted in the noise of the *Pharisees* trumpet! *Mat.* 6. 2. No musick so sweet as that. Say, O my conscience, have I not delighted more in the Theater, than the closet? in the praise of men, than the approbation of God? Oh, how many evidences dost thou produce against me? In deed these are sad symptoms that I have shewed thee, but there is yet another which renders thy case more suspicious yet; yea, that which thou canst make no rational defence against, even the ineffectualness of all thy gifts

gifts and knowledge to mortifie any one of all thy lusts. It's beyond all dispute, that gifts may, but grace cannot consist without mortification of sin. *Gal* 5 24. Now what lust hath fallen before these excellent parts of mine? Doth not pride, passion, covetousness, and indeed the whole body of sin live and thrive in me as much as ever? Lord, I yield the cause, I can defend it no longer against my conscience, which casts and condemns me by full proof to be but in a wretched, cursed lamentable state, notwithstanding all my knowledge and flourishing gifts. O shew me a more excellent way. Lord! that I had the sincerity of the poorest Saint; though I should loose the applause of all my parts: with these I see I may go to hell, but without some better thing, no hope of heaven.

The *Poem.*

GReat difference betwixt that seed is found,
With which you sow your several plots of ground.
Seed-wheat doth far exceed in (1) dignity, (1) Isa. 28. 25.
The cheaper Barley, and the courser Rye.
Though in themselves they good and wholsom are;
Yet these with choicest wheat may not compare.
Mens hearts like fields are sowed with different grain;
Some baser, some more noble; some again
Excelling (2) both the former: more than wheat (2) Prov. 12. 26
Excels that grain; your swine, and horses eat.
For principles of meer morality,
Like Cummin, Barley, Fitches, Pease, or Rye:
In those mens hearts are often to be found,
Whom yet the Scripture calleth (3) cursed ground. (3) Mat. 19 20.
And nobler principles than these sometime
Call'd (4) common grace, and spiritual gifts which shine (4) Heb. 6. 9.
In some mens heads, where is their habitation;
Yet they are no companions of salvation.
These purchase (5) honour both from great and small; (5) 1 Cor. 1. 26.
But I must tell thee that if this be all; Though

(6). Cor. 13. 1

(7) Mat. 7. 22.

(8) Rom. 10. 10

(9) Gal. 6. 8.

(1) 1 Cor. 12. 31.

Though like an (6) Angel in theſe gifts thou ſhine,
Amongſt blind morta's, for a little time:
The day's at hand, when ſuch as thou muſt take
Thy lot with (7) devils in th'infernal lake.
But principles of ſpecial ſaving grace,
Whoſe ſeat is in the (8) heart, not head or face:
Like ſolid wheat, ſowen in a fruitful field
Shall ſpring and flouriſh, and at laſt will yield
A glorious (9) harveſt of eternal reſt,
To him that nouriſh'd them within his breaſt.
O grace! how orient art thou! how divine!
What is the glory of all (1) gifts to thine!
Diſſeminate this ſeed within my heart,
My God I pray thee, though thou ſhouldſt impart
The leſs of gifts; then I may truly ſay,
That thou haſt ſhew'd me, the more ex'lent way.

CHAP. IX.

Upon ſpringing weather after Seed time.

By heavens influence, Corn and plants do ſpring,
Gods ſhowers of grace do make his valleys ſing.

OBSERVATION.

THe earth after that it is plowed and ſowed, muſt be watered and warm'd with the dews and influences of heaven, or no fruit can be expected. If God do not open to you his good treaſure, the heavens to give rain unto the Land in its ſeaſon, and bleſs all the work of your hands, as it is *Deut.* 28. 12. The earth cannot yield her increaſe. The order and dependance of natural cauſes in the productions of fruit, is excellently deſcribed, *Hoſ.* 2. 21, 22. *I will hear the heavens, and they ſhall hear the earth; and the earth ſhall hear the corn, and wine, and oyl, and they ſhall hear* Jezreel. *Jezreel* muſt

muſt have corn, and wine, and oyl, or they cannot live; they cannot have it, unleſs the earth bring it forth, the earth cannot bring it forth without the heavens, the heavens cannot yield a drop unleſs God hear them; that is, unlock and open them. * Nature and natural cauſes are nothing elſe but the order in which God works. This ſome *Heathens* by the light of nature acknowledged, and therefore when they went to plow in the morning, they did lay one hand upon the plow (to ſpeak their own part to be painfulneſs) and hold up the other hand to *Ceres* the Goddeſs of Corn, to ſhew, that their expectation of plenty was from their ſuppoſed Deity. I fear many *Chriſtians* lay both hands to the plow, and ſeldom lift up heart or hand to God, when about that work. There was an Husbandman (ſaith Mr. *Smith*) that alwayes ſowed good Seed, but never had good Corn; at laſt a neighbour came to him, and ſaid, I will tell you what probably may be the cauſe of it? it may be (ſaid he) you do not ſteep your Seed; no truly, ſaid the other, nor ever did I hear that Seed muſt be ſteeped; yes ſurely, ſaid his neighbour, and I will tell you how, it muſt be ſteeped in prayer. When the party heard this, he thanked him for his counſel, reformed his fault, and had as good Corn as any man whatſoever. Surely, it is not the Husbandmans, but Gods ſteps that drop fatneſs. *Alma mater terra*, the earth indeed is a fruitful mother, but the rain which fecundates and fertilizes it, hath no other father but God, *Job* 38. 28.

* *Natura nihil aliud eſt quam divinorum operum ordo.* Brentius

Seems Cerem. Law.

Smiths Eſſex Dove.

APPLICATION.

AS impoſſible it is (in an ordinary way) for ſouls to be made fruitful in grace and holineſs, without the dews and influences of Ordinances, and the bleſſing of God upon them, as for the earth to yield her fruit without the natural influences of heaven; for look, what dews, ſhowers, and cleer ſhinings after rain are to the fields, that the Word and Ordinances of God are to the ſouls of men. *My doctrine ſhall drop as the rain, my ſpeech ſhall diſtil as the dew, as the ſmal rain upon the tender herb, and as the ſhowers upon the graſs.*

Deut. 32. 2. *For as the rain and ſnow cometh down from heaven, and watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud; ſo ſhall my word be that goeth forth of my mouth.* Iſa. 55. 10, 11. And as the doctrine of the Goſpel is rain, ſo Goſpel Miniſters are the clouds in which thoſe heavenly vapours are bound up. The reſemblance lyes in the following particulars.

1. The rain comes from heaven, *Acts* 14. 17. *He gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful ſeaſons*, &c. The doctrine of the Goſpel is alſo of an heavenly extraction and deſcent, they are heavenly truths which are brought to you in earthen veſſels things that were hid in God, and come from his boſom, *Eph.* 3. 9. what *Nicodemus* ſaid of *Chriſt*, is in a proportion true of every faithful diſpenſer of the Goſpel, *Thou art a teacher come from God*, Joh. 3. 2. You are not to look upon the truths which Miniſters deliver, as the meer effects and fruits of their inventions and parts, they are but the Conduits through which thoſe celeſtial waters are conveyed to you. 'Tis all heavenly, the *Officers* from heaven, *Eph.* 4. 12. Their *Doctrine* from heaven, *Eph.* 3. 8, 9. The *efficacy* and *ſucceſs* of it from heaven, 1 *Cor.* 3. 3. *What I received of the Lord* (ſaith *Paul*) *that have I delivered unto you*, 1 *Cor.* 11. 23. The ſame may every Goſpel Miniſter ſay too. That's the firſt.

2. And then (2ly) The rain falls by divine direction and appointment; *He cauſes it to rain upon one City, and not upon another*, Amos 4. 7. You ſhall often ſee a cloud diſſolve and ſpend it ſelf upon one place, when there is not a drop within a few miles of it. Thus is the Goſpel ſent to ſhed its rich influences upon one place, and not upon another; it pours down ſhowers of bleſſings upon one Town or pariſh, whilſt others are dry like the ground which lay neer to *Gideons* wet fleece. *To you is the word of this ſalvation ſent*, Acts 13. 26. *Sent*, it comes not by *chance* but by *commiſſion* and appointment, and its ſent *to you* by ſpecial direction. Miniſters can no more go whither they pleaſe, than the ſailing clouds can move againſt the wind. *Paul* and *Timothy*, two fruitful clouds (that ſent down many ſweet refreſhing ſhowers upon every

place

place whither they came) the Lord ſent them through *Phrygia* and *Galatia* but forbad them to preach the word in *Aſia*. *Acts* 16. 6. And when they aſſayed to go into *Bithynia*, the ſpirit ſuffered them not, *v.* 7. But a man of *Macedonia* appears to *Paul* in a viſion, and prayed him, ſaying, come over to *Macedonia* and help us, *v.* 9. Thus you ſee, how the *myſtical*, as well as the *natural* clouds, are moved according to divine counſel; and though Miniſters are not now diſpoſed to their reſpective places, in ſuch an extraordinary way, yet there is ſtill a ſpecial hand of the Spirit guiding their motions, which is ſeen partly in qualifying them for ſuch a people, and partly in drawing out their hearts to elect and call them, and inclining their hearts to accept the call.

3. There is a great deal of difference in the ſhowers of rain that fall upon the earth. Sometimes you have an haſty ſhower, which makes the wayes fleet, and the ſtreets run, but it's gone preſently, the earth hath but little benefit by it; and ſometimes you have a ſweet, gentle, ſoaking rain, that moderately ſoaks to the root and refreſhes the earth abundantly, This is called *the ſmall rain*, and the former, *the great rain of his ſtrength*, *Job* 37. 6. So it is in theſe ſpiritual ſhowers, the effects of ſome Sermons, (like a ſudden ſpout of rain) are very tranſient; that touch the heart a little for preſent, by way of conviction or comfort, but it fleets away immediately, *Jam.* 1. 23. At other times the Goſpel like a ſetled moderate rain, ſoaks to the root, to the very heart. So did that ſweet ſhower which fell, *Acts* 2. 37. It ſearched the root, it went to the heart; the influences of it are ſometimes abiding, and do much longer remain in, and refreſh the heart, than the rain doth the earth. There be effects left in ſome hearts, by ſome Sermons and duties, that will never out of it as long as they live. *I will never forget thy precepts, for by them thou haſt quickned me*, 119. 93.

4. The rain is moſt beneficial to the earth, when there come ſweet, warm Sun blaſts with it, or after it. This the Scripture calls, *a cleer ſhining after rain*, 2 *Sam.* 23. 4. by which the *ſeminal vertue* of the earth is drawn forth, and then the herbs, and flowers, and Corn ſprout abundantly. So it is with

Goſpel-ſhowers, when the Sun of righteouſneſs opens upon poor ſouls under the word, darting down the beams of grace and love upon them, whilſt they are attending on it, (juſt as you ſometimes ſee a ſweet ſhower fall while the Sun ſhines out) O how comfortable is this! and effectual to melt the heart! and as the warm rain is moſt refreſhing, ſo when the word comes warmly, from the melting affections of the Preacher, who imparts not only the Goſpel, but his own ſoul with it, 1 *Theſſ.* 2. 8. This doth abundantly more good than that which drops coldly from the lips of the unaffected ſpeaker.

5. Showers of rain do exceedingly refreſh the earth, as a man is refreſhed by a draught of water, when his ſpirits are even ſpent. O how welcom is a ſhower to the thirſty ground! Hence the little hills are ſaid to rejoyce on every ſide, yea to ſhout for joy, and ſing when a ſhower comes, *Pſal.* 65. 12, 13. but never was ſhower of rain ſo ſweetly refreſhing to the thirſty earth, as Goſpel-ſhowers are to gracious hearts, *Col.* 4. 8. it comforts their very hearts. What joy was there in *Samaria*, when the Goſpel came to that place? *Act.* 8. 8. It revives the ſoul, 'its *mel in ore, melos in aure, jubilum in corde*, honey in the mouth, melody in the ear, and a very jubilee in the heart.

6. Rain is neceſſary at Seed-time, to make ready the earth, to receive the ſeed, *Pſal.* 65. 9, 10. *Thou viſiteſt the earth, and watereſt it; thou greatly enricheſt it with the river of God, which is full of water; thou prepareſt them corn, when thou haſt ſo provided for it; thou watereſt the ridges thereof abundantly, thou ſettleſt the furrows thereof, thou makeſt it ſoft with ſhowers, thou bleſſeſt the ſpringing thereof.* And this the Scripture calls the former rain. And as this is neceſſary about Seed-time, ſo the latter rain is as needful about earing-time, to diſcloſe the ear, and to bring it to perfection; both theſe are great bleſſings to the earth, and conduce to a plentiful harveſt, *Joel* 2. 23, 24. *Be glad then ye children of* Sion, *and rejoyce in the Lord your God, for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cauſe to come down for you the rain, the former and the latter rain in the firſt moneth, and the floors ſhall be full of wheat*

wheat, and the faces shall overflow with wine and oyl. Thus the Gospel hath a double use and benefit also. It's necessary as the former rain at Seed-time, it causes the first spring of grace in the heart, *Psal.* 19.7. And there could be, (in an ordinary way) no spring of grace without it, *Prov.* 29. 18. And as this former rain is necessary to cause the first spring of grace, so also it hath the use of the latter rain to ripen those precious fruits of the Spirit in the souls of Believers, *Eph.* 4. 11, 12, 13. *He gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.* Were all the elect converted unto God, yet still there would be a necessity of a Gospel Ministry.

7. After a great glut of rain, usually there comes a drought; 'tis a common Countrey Poverb, *Wet and dry pay one another.* And truly when a people are glutted with a fulness of Gospel-mercies, it's usual with God to shut up and restrain the Gospel-clouds, that for a time (at least) there be no dews upon them, and thereby teach them to prize their despised because common mercies at an higher rate. For as a good man once said, mercies are best known by the back, and most prized when most wanted. *In those dayes the word of the Lord was precious, there was no open vision,* 1 *Sam.* 3. 1. It is with spiritual as with temporal food, slighted when plenteous, but if a famine once come, then every bit of bread is precious. *Jerusalem* remembred in the dayes of her affliction, and of her misery, all her pleasant things that she had in the dayes of old, *Lam.* 1. 7. 'Tis both a sinful and dangerous thing to wantonize with Gospel-mercies, and despise the plainest (if faithfull) Ministers of the Gospel. The time may come when you may be glad of the plainest Sermon, from the mouth of the meanest Embassador of Christ.

8. To conclude, the prayers of Saints are the keys that open and shut the natural clouds, and cause them either to give out,

out, or with-hold their influences, *James* 5. 18. *Elias was a man ſubject to like paſſions as we are, and he prayed earneſtly that it might not rain, and it rained not on the earth, by the ſpace of three years and ſix moneths; and he prayed again, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth brought forth fruit* God hath ſubjected the works of his hands, to the prayers of his Saints, *Iſa.* 45. 11.

Prayer is alſo the golden key which opens theſe myſtical Goſpel-clouds, and diſſolves them into ſweet gracious ſhowers. God will have the whole work of the Miniſtry carried on by the prayers of his people, they firſt obtain their Miniſters by prayer, *Luke* 10. 2. *Pray ye the Lord of the Harveſt, to ſend forth labourers into the vineyard.* It is by the the help of prayer, that they are carried on, and enabled to exerciſe their Miniſtry. They may tell their people as a great General once told his Souldiers, *That he flew upon their wings. Pray for me* (ſaith the great Apoſtle) *that utterance may be given me, that I may open my Mouth boldly, to make known the myſteries of the Goſpel*, Eph. 6. 19. Yea, by the Saints prayers it is, that Miniſters obtain the ſucceſs and fruits of their labours, 2 *Theſ.* 3. 1. *Finally brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free courſe, and be glorified even as it is with you.* And thus you have the Metaphor opened. Now, Oh! that theſe truths might come down in ſweet ſhowers upon the hearts both of Miniſters and people, in the following Reflections.

3. Reflection for Goſpel Miniſters

1.

REFLECTIONS.

Am I then a cloud? and is my doctrine as rain to water the Lords inheritance? and yet do I think it much to be toſſed up and down by the furious winds & ſtorms of perſecution? Do I not ſee the clouds above me in continual motions and agitations? and ſhall I dream of a fixed ſetled ſtate? No, falſe Teachers, who are clouds without rain, are more likely to enjoy that, than I. Which of all the Prophets have not been toſſed and hurried worſe than I? *Act.* 7. 52. He that will not let men alone to be quiet in their luſts, muſt ex-

expect but little quiet from men in this life. But it is enough Lord, that a reſt remaineth for thy ſervant, let me be ſo wiſe to ſecure a reſt to come, and not ſo vain to expect it on earth.

2.

And, O that I might ſtudy thoſe inſtructing clouds, from which, as from the bottles of heaven, God pours down refreſhing ſhowers to quench and ſatisfie the thirſty earth! in this may I reſemble them, and come amongſt the people of the Lord, *in the fulneſs of the bleſſing of the Goſpel of Chriſt*, *Rom.* 15. 29. O let not thoſe thirſty ſouls that wait for me as for the rain, *Job* 29. 23. *Return like the troops of* Tema, *aſhamed with their heads covered*, Job 6. 19. O that my lips might refreſh many! Let me never be like thoſe empty clouds, which deceive the hopes of thirſty ſouls; but let my doctrine deſcend as the rain, and diſtil as the dew, and let that plot of thine inheritance which thou haſt aſſigned to me, be as a field which the Lord hath bleſſed.

Once more, lift up thine eyes to the clouds, and behold, to how great an height the Sun hath mounted them, for by reaſon of their ſublimity it is that they are called the clouds of heaven, *Mat.* 24. 30. Lord, let me be a cloud of heaven too! Let my heart and converſation be both there! who is more advantaged for an heavenly life than I? heavenly truths are the ſubjects of my daily ſtudy, and ſhall earthly things be the objects of my daily delights and loves? God forbid that ever my earthly converſation ſhould contradict and ſhame my heavenly calling and profeſſion. Shine forth thou glorious Sun of righteouſneſs, and my heart ſhall quickly be attracted and mounted above theſe viſible clouds, yea, and above the aſpectable heavens.

3.

3. Reflections for private Chriſtians.

1. For thoſe that want a Goſpel Miniſtry.

Is the Goſpel rain, and its Miniſters clouds? wo is me then, that my habitation is upon the mountains of *Gilboa*, where there are no dews! Ah ſad lot, that I ſhould be like *Gideons* dry fleece, whilſt the ground round about me is wet with the dew of heaven! O thou that commandeſt the clouds above, and openeſt the windows of heaven; remember, and refreſh this parched wilderneſs, wherein I live, with ſhowers of grace, that we may not be as the heath in the deſart,

desart, which seeth not when good cometh, nor inhabit the parched places of the wilderness.

2. For those that enjoy a Gospel Ministry.

O Lord, thou hast caused the heavens above me to be black with clouds, thou openest the celestial casements from above, and daily sendest down showers of Gospel-blessings; O that I might be as the parched earth under them! not for barrenness, but for thirstiness. Let me say, *My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the Courts of the Lord*: that I might there see the beauty of the Lord. Doth the spungy earth so greedily suck up the showers, and open as many mouths as there are clefts in it, to receive what the clouds dispense? and shall those precious soul-inriching showers fleet away unprofitably from me? if so, then,

3. For unprofitable hearers.

What an account have I to make for all those Gospel-blessings that I have injoyed? for all those Gospel-dews and showers wherewith I have been watered! Should I be found fruitless at last, it will fare better with the barren and uncultivated wilderness, than with me; more tollerable for *Indians* and *Barbarians*, that never heard the Gospel, than for me that have been so assiduously and plenteously watered by it. Lord, what a difference wilt thou put in the great day, betwixt simple and pertinacious barrenness! Surely, if my root be not rottenness, such heavenly waterings and influences as these, will make it sprout forth into fruits of obedience.

The *Poem*.

THe (1) vegetables here below depend,
Upon those (2) treasures which the heavens do spend
Most bounteously upon them: to preserve
Their being, and their beauty. This may serve
To shadow forth a heavenly mystery,
Which thus presents it self before your eye.

(1) Isa. 44 14.
(2) Deut. 28. 12.

As

As when the Sun draws near us in spring,
All creatures do (3) rejoyce, birds, chirp and sing.
The face of nature smiles, the fields (4) adorn
Themselves, with rich embroyderies. The corn
Revives, and shooteth up, the warm sweet rain
Makes trees, and herbs (5) sprout forth and spring amain,
Walk but the fields in such a fragrant morn,
How do the (6) birds your ears with musick charm!
The (7) flowers, their flaming beauty's do present
Unto your captiv'd eyes: and for their scent,
The sweet *Arabian* gums cannot compare;
Which thus perfume, the circumambient air.
So, when the Gospel sheds its cheering beams,
On gracious souls; like those sweet warming gleams,
Which God ordains in nature; to draw forth
The virtue seminal that's in the earth:
It warms their (8) hearts, their languid graces cheers;
And on such souls, a (9) spring-like face appears.
The gracious showers these spiritual clouds do yield,
Inriches them with (1) sweetness; like a field
Which God hath blest. Oh! 'tis exceeding sweet,
When gracious hearts, and (2) heavenly truths do meet.
How should the hearts of Saints within them spring,
When they behold (3) the messengers that bring
These gladsom tydings? yea, their very feet
Are beautiful; because their message sweet.
Oh what a mercy do those (4) souls enjoy
On whom such Gospel-dews fall day by day!
Thrice happy Land which in this pleasant spring,
Can hear these Turtles, in her hedges sing.
O prize such mercies, if you ask me why?
Read on, you'le see, there's reason by and by.

(3) Cant. 2. 11 12.
(4) Psal. 104. 30.
(5) Psal. 65. 12.
(6) Psal. 104. 12.
(7) Cant. 2. 12.
(8) Col. 4. 8.
(9) Psal. 52. 8.
(1) Rom. 15 29
(2) Rom. 10. 15
(3) Acts 8. 8.
(4) Psal. 149. 19, 20.

CHAP. X.

Upon a dearth through want of rain

If God reſtrain the ſhowers, you howle and cry;
Shall Saints not mourn, when ſpiritual clouds are dry?

OBSERVATION.

'TIs deſervedly accounted a ſad judgment, when God ſhuts up the heavens over our heads, and makes the earth as braſs under our feet, *Deut.* 28. 23. Then the Husbandmen are called to mourning, *Joel* 1. 11. All the fields do languiſh, and the bellowing cattel are pined with thirſt. Such a ſad ſtate the Prophet rhetorically deſcribes, *Jer.* 14. 3, 4, 5, 6. *The Nobles have ſent their little ones to the waters; they came to the pits and found no water, they returned with their veſſels empty, they were aſhamed, and confounded, and covered their heads; becauſe the ground is chapt, for there was no rain in the earth, the Plowmen were aſhamed, they covered their heads: yea, the Hinde alſo calved in the field and forſook it, becauſe there was no graſs: and the wilde aſſes did ſtand in the high places, they ſnuffed up the wind like dragons, their eyes failed becauſe there was no graſs.*

And that which makes the want of rain ſo terrible a judgment, is the famine of bread, which neceſſarily follows theſe extraordinary droughts and is one of the ſoreſt temporal judgments which God inflicts upon the world.

APPLICATION.

AND truly, as much cauſe have they to weep and tremble, over whoſe ſouls God ſhuts up the ſpiritual clouds of the Goſpel, and thereby ſending a ſpiritual famine upon their ſouls. Such a judgment the Lord threatens in *Amos* 8. 11. *Behold the dayes come, ſaith the Lord, that I will ſend a famine in the Land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirſt for water;*

but

but of hearing the word of the Lord. The meaning is, I will send a more fearful judgment, than that of the famine of bread; for this Particle [not] is not *exclusive*, but *excessive*; implying, that a famine of bread is nothing, or but a light judgment, compared with the famine of the Word. Parallel to which is that Text, *Isa.* 5. 6. *I will lay it waste* (saith God of the fruitless Church) *it shall not be pruned nor digged, but there shall come up bryars and thorns; I will also command the clouds, that they rain not upon it.* And we find both in humane and sacred Histories, that when God hath shut up the spiritual clouds, removing or silencing his Ministers; sensible Christians have ever been deeply affected with it, and reckoned it a most tremenduous judgment. Thus the Christians of *Antioch*, when *Chrysostom* their Minister was banished * they judged it better to lose the Sun out of the firmament, than lose that, their Minister. And when *Nazianzen* was taking his leave of *Constantinople*, as he was preaching his farewel-Sermon, the people were exceedingly affected with his loss; and among the rest, an old man in the Congregation fell into a bitter passion, and cryed out, *Aude pater, & tecum trinitatem ipsam ejice.* (*i. e.*) Go farther, if you dare, and take away the whole Trinity with you; meaning, that God would not stay when he was gone. How did the Christians of *Antioch* also weep and lament, when *Paul* was taking his farewel of them? *Act.* 20. 37, 38. He had been a cloud of blessings to that place, but now they must expect no more showers from him. Oh, they knew not how to give up such a Minister! when the Ark of God (which was the Symbole of the divine presence among the Jews) was taken, *all the City cryed out*, 1 *Sam.* 4. 13. O, the loss of a Gospel Ministry is an inestimable loss! not to be repaired but by its own return, or by heaven. Mr. *Greenham* tells us, that in the times of Popish persecution, when godly Ministers were haled away from their flocks to Martyrdom, the poor Christians would meet them in the way to the prisons or stake, with their little ones in their arms, and throwing themselves at their feet, would thus bespeak them: "What "shall be our estate, now you are gone to Martyrdom? who

* *Satius est ut sol non luceat, quam ut non doceat* Chrysostomus.

"shall instruct these poor Babes? who shall ease our afflicted consciences? who shall lead us in the way of life? "recompense unto them, O Lord! as they have deserved, "who are the causes of this, Lord give them sad hearts. *Quis talia fando, temperet a lachrymis?* And to let you see, there is sufficient ground for this sorrow, when God restrains the influences of the Gospel, solemnly consider the following particulars.

1. That it is a dreadful token of God's great anger against that people from whom he removes the Gospel. The anger of God was fearfully incensed against the Church of *Ephesus*, when he did but threaten to come against her, and remove the Candlestick out of its place, *Rev.* 2. 5. 'Tis a stroke at the soul, a blow at the root; usually the last, and therefore the worst of judgments. There is a pedigree of judgments, first *Gomer* bears *Jezreel*, next *Loruhamah*, and at last brings forth *Loammi*, *Hos.* 1. 4, 6, 8, 9.

2. There is cause of mourning, if you consider the deplorable state in which all the unregenerate souls are left, after the Gospel is removed from them. What will become of these? or by whom shall they be gathered? it made the bowels of Christ yearn within him, when he looked upon the scattered multitude that had no Shepherd, *Mat.* 9. 36. What an easie conquest doth the devil now make of them? how fast doth hell fill in such times? poor souls, being driven thither in droves, and none to rescue them! *Mathew Paris* tells us, that in the year 1072. when preaching was suppresst at *Rome*, letters were then framed as coming from hell; wherein the devil gave them thanks for the multitude of souls they had sent to him that year. But truly we need not talk of letters from hell, we are told from heaven, how deplorable the condition of such poor souls is. See *Prov.* 28. 19. *Hos.* 4. 6. Or,

3. The judgment will yet appear very heavy, if you consider the loss which God's own people sustain by the removal of the Gospel; for therein they lose (1) their chief glory, *Rom.* 3. 2. the principal thing in which the peculiar glory of *Israel* consisted was this, *That unto them was committed the Oracles*

Oracles of God. On that account it was called the glorious Land, *Dan.* 11. 16. This made them greater than all the Nations round about them, *Deut.* 4. 7 8. (2) By losing the Ordinances, they lose their quicknings, comforts, and sweet refreshments; for all these are sweet streams from the Gospel fountain, *Psal.* 119. 50. Col. 4. 8. No wonder then to hear the people of God complain of dead hearts, when the Gospel is removed. (3) In the loss of the Gospel they lose their defence and safety. This is their hedge, their wall of protection, *Isa.* 5. 5. Walls and hedges (saith *Musculus in loc.*) are the Ordinances of God, which serve both *ad seperationem & munitionem*, to distinguish, and to defend them. When God plucks up this hedge, and breaks down this wall, all mischiefs break in upon us presently, 2 *Chron.* 15. 3, 4. 5, 6. *Now for a long season* Israel *hath been without the true God, and without a teaching Priest, and without Law — And in those times there was no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but great vexations were upon all the inhabitants of the Countries and Nation was destroyed of Nation, and City of City; for God did vex them with all adversity.* How long did *Jerusalem* remain, after that voice was heard in the Temple, *migremus hinc?* Let us be gone? (4) With the Gospel, we lose our temporal injoyments and creature-comforts. These usually come and go with the Gospel. When God had once written *Loammi* upon *Israel*, the next news is this, *I will recover my wool and my flax*, *Hos.* 2. 9. (5) and lastly, to come up to the very case in hand, they lose with it their spiritual food, and soul-subsistence; for the Gospel is their *feast of fat things*, *Isa.* 25. 6. their spiritual wells, *Isa.* 12. 3. a dole distributed among the Lords poor, *Rom.* 1. 11. in a word, it is as the rain and dews of heaven, as hath been shewed, which being restrained, a spiritual famine necessarily follows: a famine of all the most terrible. Now to shew you the analogy betwixt this, and a temporal famine, that therein you may see what cause you have to be deeply affected with it, take it in these six following particulars.

A famine is caused by the failing of bread, or that which is in the stead, and hath the use of bread. Dainties and superfluous

fluous rarities may fail, and yet men may ſubſiſt comfortably. As long as people have bread and water, they will not famiſh; but take away bread once, and the ſpirit of man faileth. Upon this account bread is called a ſtaff, *Pſal.* 105. 16. becauſe what a ſtaff is to an aged or feeble man, that bread is to the faint and feeble ſpirits, which even ſo do lean upon it. And look what bread is to the natural ſpirits, that, and more than that, the word is to gracious ſpirits, *Job* 23. 12. *I have eſteemed the words of thy mouth, more than my neceſſary food.* If once God break this ſtaff, the inner man, that hidden man of the heart, will quickly begin to fail and faulter.

2. It is not every degree of ſcarcity of bread, that preſently makes a famine, but a general failing of it; when no bread is to be had, or that which is, yields no nutriment. For a famine may as well be occaſioned by Gods taking away, *panis nutrimentum*, the nouriſhing vertue of bread, that it ſhall ſignifie no more as to the end of bread, than a chip, *Hag.* 1. 6. as by taking away *panem nutrientem*, bread it ſelf, *Iſa.* 3. 1. And ſo it is in a ſpiritual famine, which is occaſioned either by God's removing all the Ordinances, and making viſion utterly to fail; or elſe, though there be preaching, prayer, and other Ordinances left, (at leaſt, the names and ſhadows of them) yet the preſence of God is not with them. There is no marrow in the bone, no milk in the breaſt; and ſo, as to ſoul-ſubſiſtence, 'tis all one, as if there were no ſuch things.

3. In a corporeal famine, mean and courſe things become ſweet and pleaſant; famine raiſes the price and eſteem of them. That which before you would have thrown to your dogs, now goes down pleaſantly with your ſelves. To the hungry ſoul every bitter thing is ſweet, *Prov.* 27. 7. 'Tis the Dutch Proverb, and a very true one, Hunger is the beſt Cook.

Jejunus ſtomachus raro vulgaria temnit. Horat.
In time of Famine courſeſt fare contents,
The barking ſtomach ſtrains no complements.

'Tis

'Tis ſtoried of *Artaxerxes Memor*, that when he was flying before his enemies, he fed hungrily upon barley bread, and ſaid, *Cujuſmodi voluptatis hactenus inexpertus fuit?* Oh, what pleaſure have I hitherto been ignorant of? When great *Darius* drank the puddled water, that had been diſtilled with dead carcaſes which had been ſlain in that famous battel, he profeſſed he never drank more pleaſant drink. And famous *Hunniades* ſaid, He never fared more daintily, than when (in a like exigence) he ſupped upon bread, onions, and water, with a poor Shepherd in his cottage.

Juſt ſo, doth a famine of the Word raiſe the price and eſteem, of vulgar and deſpiſed truths. O what would we give for one of thoſe Sermons, one of thoſe Sabbaths we formerly enjoyed? *In thoſe dayes the word of the Lord was precious.* When God calls to the enemy to take away and remove his contemned, but precious dainties, from his wanton children, and a ſpiritual famine hath a little pinched them, they will then learn to prize their ſpiritual food, at a higher rate.

In time of famine ſome perſons ſuffer more than others. It falls heavieſt and pincheth hardeſt upon the poorer ſort, 4.
as long as any thing is to be had for money, the rich will have it. So it falls out in a ſpiritual famine; although the moſt experienced, and beſt furniſhed Chriſtians, will have enough to do to live in the abſence of Ordinances, yet they are like to ſubſiſt much better, than weak, ignorant, and unexperienced ones. Some Chriſtians have husbanded their time well, and like *Joſeph* in the ſeven years *plenty*, laid up for a *ſcarcity*. The Word of God dwells richly in them. Some ſuch there are, as *John* calls young men, who are ſtrong, .1
and the word of God remaineth in them, of whom it may be ſaid, as *Jerom* ſpake of *Nepotianus*, that by long and aſſiduous meditation of the Scriptures, he had made his breaſt the very Library of Chriſt. But others are babes in Chriſt; and though God will preſerve that good work which he hath begun in them, yet theſe poor babes will ſooneſt find, and be moſt concerned in the loſs of their ſpiritual Fathers and Nurſes.

In

5. In time of famine there are pitiful cryes, and heart-breaking complaints where-ever you go. O the many pale faces you shall then see, and the sad language that rings in your ears in every place! One cryes, bread, bread, for Christ's sake, one bit of bread; another faints and falls down at your door. *All her People sigh*, Lam. 1. 11. Yea, the poor little ones are brought in, v. 12. crying to their Mothers, where is the corn and wine? and then pouring out their souls into their Mothers bosom. Just so it is in a famine of the Word; poor Christians every-where sighing and crying, O where are our godly Ministers? our sweet Sabbaths, Sermons, Sacraments, my Fathers, my Fathers, the chariots of *Israel* and the horsemen thereof? How beautiful were your feet upon the mountains! And then weeping, like the people at *Pauls* departure, to think they shall see their faces no more.

6. Lastly, in time of famine, there is nothing so costly or precious, but people will part with it to purchase bread. *They have given their pleasant things, for meat to relieve their souls*, Lam. 1. 11. And doubtless when a spiritual famine shall pinch hard, those that have been close-handed to maintain a Gospel-Ministry, will account it a choice mercy to enjoy them again at any rate. *Though the Lord feed you with the bread of affliction, and give you the waters of adversity, yet it will sweeten that bread and water to you, if your teachers be no more removed into corners*, Isa. 30. 20.

REFLECTIONS.

The ungrateful souls Reflection.

1. Is the famine of the word such a fearful judgment? then Lord pardon my unthankfulness, for the plentiful and long continued injoyment of such a precious and invaluable mercy. How lightly have I esteemed the great things of the Gospel? O that with eyes and hands lifted up to heaven, I might bless the Lord, that ever I was brought forth in an age of so much light! in a valley of visions, in a Land flowing with Gospel-mercies. *Hath not God made of one blood, all the Nations of men, to dwell on the face of the earth? and determined*

minded the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation? Acts 17. 26. Many of these great and populous Nations are involved in gross darkness. Now that of all the several ages of the world, and places in it; God should espy the best place for me, and bring me forth into it, in such an happy nick of time, as can hardly be paralled in History, for the plenty of Gospel-mercies, that this age and Nation hath enjoyed; that my Mother did not bring me forth in the desarts of *Arabia*, or wastes of *America*, but in *England* where God hath made the Sun of the Gospel to stand still, as the natural Sun once did over *Gibeon*; and that such a mercy should no more affect my soul, let shame cover my face for this, and trembling seize my heart.

2. The deprived Christians Reflection.

Is the Gospel indeed departed? its sweet influences restrained? and a famine worse then that of bread come upon us. *Alas! for the day for it is a great day so that none is like it; it is even the day of* Jacob's *trouble.* Wo is me, that ever I should survive the Gospel, and the precious liberties and mercies of it! What horrid sins have been harboured amongst us, for which the Lord contends, by such an unparalleld judgment? Lord, let me justifie thee even in this severe dispensation; the provocation of thy Sons, and of thy daughters have been very great, and amongst them none greater than mine. May we not this day read our sin in our punishment? O what nice and wanton appetites, what curious and itching ears, had thy people in the dayes of plenty? Methods, tones and gestures, were more regarded than the excellent treasures of divine truths. Ah my soul! I remember my fault this day, little did I then consider, that Sermons work not upon hearts, as they are thus elegant, thus admirable, but as they are instruments in the hand of God appointed to such an end. Even as *Austin* said of the Conduits of water, though one be in the shape of an Angel, another of a beast, yet the water refreshes as it is water, and not as it comes from such a Conduit: By this also, O Lord, thou rebukest the supineſs and formality of thy people. How drowsie, dull, and careless have they been under the most excellent and quickning means? few more then I. Alas! I have often presented my

body before the Lord in Ordinances, ἡ δὲ ψυχὴ ἐξῶ; but my ſoul hath been wandring abroad, as *Chryſoſtom* ſpeaks. I ſhould have come from under every Sermon as a ſheet comes from the preſs, with all the ſtamps and lively impreſſions of the truths I heard upon my heart. But Alas! If it had been demanded of me, as once it was of *Ariſtotle*, after a long and curious Oration; how he liked it, I might have anſwered as he did, truly I did not hear it; for I was all the while minding another matter. Righteous art thou, O Lord, in all that is come upon us.

3. The ſilent Miniſters Reflection.

I am now as a Spring ſhut up, that can yield no refreſhment to thirſty ſouls, ready to periſh. Thou haſt ſaid to me as once to *Ezekiel*, *Son of man, behold, I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, and thou ſhalt be dumb.* This is a heavy judgment, but thou muſt be juſtified and cleared in it. Although men may not, yet God, if he pleaſe, may put a lighted candle under a buſhel. And herein I muſt acknowledge thy righteouſneſs. Many times have I been ſinfully ſilent, when both thy glory and the intereſt of ſouls ingaged me to ſpeak. Moſt juſtly therefore haſt thou made my tongue to cleave to its roof. Little did I conſider the preciouſneſs of ſouls, or the tremenduous account to be given for them, at the appearing of the great Shepherd. I have now time enough to ſit down and mourn over former miſcarriages, and loſt opportunities. Lord reſtore me once again to a ſerviceable capacity, to a larger ſphere of activity for thee, for I am now become as a broken veſſel. It grieves me to the heart, to ſee thy flock ſcattered, to hear thy people cry to me, as once to *Joſeph*, *Give us bread, for why ſhould we dye in thy preſence?* Thy word is like fire, ſhut up in my bones, and I am weary with forbearing. O, that thou wouldſt once again open the doors of thine houſe, that there may be bread enough in thine houſe for all thy children.

The

The *POEM.*

WHen God doth make the (1) heavens above us braſs,
The earth's like iron. Flowers, herbs and graſs
Have loſt their fragrant green; are turned (2) yellow.
The brooks are dry, the pining cattel (3) bellow.
The fat and flowry meadows ſcorcht and burn'd.
The Countreys mirth is into (4) mourning turn'd.
The clefted earth, her thirſty mouth (5) ſets ope,
Unto the empty clouds; as 'twere in hope
Of ſome refreſhing drops, that might allay;
Her fiery thirſt: but thye ſoon paſs away.
The penſive (6) Husbandman with his own eyes,
Bedews his Land; becauſe he ſees the skies:
Refuſe to do it, (7) juſt ſo ſtands the caſe,
When God from ſouls, removes the means of grace.
God's Miniſters are clouds, their doctrine (8) rain;
Which when the Lord in judgment ſhall reſtrain:
The peoples ſouls in ſhort time will be found
In ſuch a caſe, as this dry, parched ground.
When this (9) ſad judgment falls on any Nation,
Let Saints therein take up this lsmentation.

O dreadful, dark, and diſmal day!
How is our glory fled away.
Our Sun gone down, our ſtars o're caſt;
God's heritage, is now laid waſt.
Our pining ſouls no bread can get,
With wantons God hath juſtly met,
When we were fed unto the full,
This man was tedious; that was dull.
But they are gone, and there remain
No ſuch occaſions to complain.
Stars are not now for lights, but ſigns;
God knows of what heart-breaking times.
Sure heaven intends not peace, but wars;
In calling home Ambaſſadors.

(1) Deut. 28. 23
(2) Joel 1. 19.
(3) Joel 1. 20. Jer. 14. 5, 6.
(4) Joel 1. 11.
(5) Jer. 14. 4.
(6) Amos 5. 16
(7) Amos 8. 11
(8) Deut. 32. 2. Heb. 6. 7, 8.
(9) Hoſ. 9. 12.

body before the Lord in Ordinances, ἡ δὲ ψυχὴ ἐξῶ; but my soul hath been wandring abroad, as *Chrysostom* speaks. I should have come from under every Sermon as a sheet comes from the press, with all the stamps and lively impressions of the truths I heard upon my heart. But Alas! If it had been demanded of me, as once it was of *Aristotle*, after a long and curious Oration; how he liked it, I might have answered as he did, truly I did not hear it; for I was all the while minding another matter. Righteous art thou, O Lord, in all that is come upon us.

3. The silent Ministers Reflection.

I am now as a Spring shut up, that can yield no refreshment to thirsty souls, ready to perish. Thou hast said to me as once to *Ezekiel*, *Son of man, behold, I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, and thou shalt be dumb.* This is a heavy judgment, but thou must be justified and cleared in it. Although men may not, yet God, if he please, may put a lighted candle under a bushel. And herein I must acknowledge thy righteousness. Many times have I been sinfully silent, when both thy glory and the intereſt of souls ingaged me to speak. Most justly therefore hast thou made my tongue to cleave to its roof. Little did I consider the preciousness of souls, or the tremenduous account to be given for them, at the appearing of the great Shepherd. I have now time enough to sit down and mourn over former miscarriages, and lost opportunities. Lord restore me once again to a serviceable capacity, to a larger sphere of activity for thee, for I am now become as a broken vessel. It grieves me to the heart, to see thy flock scattered, to hear thy people cry to me, as once to *Joseph*, *Give us bread, for why should we dye in thy presence?* Thy word is like fire, shut up in my bones, and I am weary with forbearing. O, that thou wouldst once again open the doors of thine house, that there may be bread enough in thine house for all thy children.

The

The *POEM.*

WHen God doth make the (1) heavens above us braſs,
The earth's like iron. Flowers, herbs and graſs
Have loſt their fragrant green; are turned (2) yellow.
The brooks are dry, the pining cattel (3) bellow.
The fat and flowry meadows ſcorcht and burn'd.
The Countreys mirth is into (4) mourning turn'd.
The clefted earth, her thirſty mouth (5) ſets ope,
Unto the empty clouds; as 'twere in hope
Of ſome refreſhing drops, that might allay;
Her fiery thirſt: but thye ſoon paſs away.
The penſive (6) Husbandman with his own eyes,
Bedews his Land; becauſe he ſees the skies:
Refuſe to do it, (7) juſt-ſo ſtands the caſe,
When God from ſouls, removes the means of grace.
God's Miniſters are clouds, their doctrine (8) rain;
Which when the Lord in judgment ſhall reſtrain:
The peoples ſouls in ſhort time will be ſound
In ſuch a caſe, as this dry, parched ground.
When this (9) ſad judgment falls on any Nation,
Let Saints therein take up this lsmentation.

O dreadful, dark, and diſmal day!
How is our glory fled away.
Our Sun gone down, our ſtars o're caſt;
God's heritage, is now laid waſt.
Our pining ſouls no bread can get,
With wantons God hath juſtly met,
When we were fed unto the full,
This man was tedious; that was dull.
But they are gone, and there remain
No ſuch occaſions to complain.
Stars are not now for lights, but ſigns;
God knows of what heart-breaking times.
Sure heaven intends not peace, but wars;
In calling home Ambaſſadors.

(1) Deut. 28. 23
(2) Joel 1. 19.
(3) Joel 1. 20. Jer. 14. 5, 6.
(4) Joel 1. 11.
(5) Jer. 14. 4.
(6) Amos 5. 16
(7) Amos 8. 11
(8) Deut. 32. 2. Heb. 6. 7, 8.
(9) Hoſ. 9. 12.

How long did *Sodom's* judgment ſtay?
When righteous *Lot* was ſnatcht away.
How long remain'd that ſtately Hall,
When *Sampſon* made the pillars fall?
When Horſemen, and Commanders fly;
Wo to the helpleſs Infantry.
This is a ſad and fatal blow,
A publick loſs and overthrow.
You that ſo long wiſh'd them gone,
Be quiet now; the thing is done.
Did they torment you ere your day?
God hath remov'd them out o'th'way.
Now ſleep in ſin, and take your eaſe;
Their doctrine ſhall no more diſpleaſe.
But Lord! what ſhall become of us?
Our Teacher's gone, and left us thus!
To whom ſhall we our ſelves addreſs,
When conſcience labours in diſtreſs?
O, who ſhall help us at our need?
Or pour in Balm, when wounds do bleed?
Help Lord, for unto thee our eyes
Do pour out tears; our groans, our cryes
Shall never ceaſe: till thou reſtore.
The mercies which we had before.
Till *Sions* paths where graſs now grows,
Be trodden by the feet of thoſe
That love thy name: and long t' enjoy
The mercies they have ſin'd away.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Seeds dye and rot, and then most fresh appear,
Saints bodies rise more orient then they were.

Upon the corrupting of the Seed before it spring.

OBSERVATION.

AFter the seed is committed to the earth, it seems to perish and dye, as our Saviour speaks, *John* 12. 24. *Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and dye, it abideth alone, but if it dye, it brings forth much fruit.* The death of the Corn in the earth is not a total death, but only the corruption or alteration of it: for if once the seminal life and vertue of it were quite extinguisht, it could never put forth blade or ear without a miracle. Yet, because that alteration is a kind of death, therefore Christ here uses it as a fit illustration of the resurrection. And indeed there is nothing in nature more apt to illustrate that great mystery. What a fragrant, green and beautiful blade do we see spring up from a corrupted seed? how black, and mouldy is that? how beautiful and verdant is this?

APPLICATION.

EVen thus shall the bodies of the Saints arise in beauty and glory at the resurrection. *They are sown in dishonour, they are raised in glory; they are sown natural bodies, they are raised spiritual bodies,* 1 *Cor.* 15. 43, 44. The Husbandman knows, that though the seed rot in the earth, yet it will rise again. And the believer knows, *That though after his skin worms destroy his body, yet in his flesh he shall see God.* Job 19. 25. *&c.* and the resemblance betwixt the seed sown, and springing up, and the bodies of the Saints dying, and rising again, lyes in these following particulars.

1. First, the ſeed is committed to the earth from whence it came, ſo is the body of a Saint; earth it was, and to earth it is again reſolved. Grace exempts not the body of the beſt man from ſeeing corruption, *Rom.* 8. 10. Though Chriſt be in him, yet the body is dead; that is, ſentenced to death, becauſe of ſin, *Heb. 9. ult. It is appointed for all men once to dye.*

2. Secondly, The ſeed is caſt into the earth in hope, 1 *Cor.* 9. 10. Were there not a reſurrection of it expected, the Husbandman would never be willing to caſt away his Corn. The bodies of Saints are alſo committed to the grave in hope, 1 *Theſſ.* 4. 13, 14. *But I would not have you to be ignorant brethren, concerning thoſe which are aſleep, as them which have no hope; for if we believe that Jeſus dyed and roſe again, even ſo alſo them which ſleep in Jeſus ſhall the Lord bring with him.* This bleſſed hope of a reſurrection, ſweetens, not only the troubles of life, but the pangs of death.

3. Thirdly, the ſeed is caſt into the earth ſeaſonably, in its proper ſeaſon. So are the bodies of the Saints, *Job.* 5. 26. *Thou ſhalt come to thy grave in a full age, as a ſhock of corn cometh in, in its ſeaſon.* They alwayes dye in the fitteſt time, though ſometimes they ſeem to dye immaturately. The time of their death was from all eternity prefixt by God, beyond which they cannot go, and ſhort of which they cannot come.

4. The ſeed lyes many dayes and nights under the clods, before it riſe and appear again. *Even ſo man lyeth down, and riſeth not again till the heavens be no more,* Job. 14. 12. The dayes of darkneſs in the grave are many.

5. When the time is come for its ſhooting up, the earth that covered it can hid it no longer, it cannot keep it down a day more; it will find or make a way through the clods. So in that day when the great trump ſhall ſound, bone ſhall come to his bone, and the graves ſhall not be able to hold them a minute longer. Both Sea and earth muſt render the dead that are in them, *Rev.* 20. 13.

6. When the ſeed appears above ground again, it appears much more freſh and orient than when it was caſt into the earth. God cloaths it with ſuch beauty, that it is not like

to

to what it was before. Thus riſe the bodies of Saints, marvellouſly improved, beautified and perfected with ſpiritual qualites and rich endowments; in reſpect whereof they are called ſpiritual bodies, 1 *Cor.* 15. 43. not properly, but analogically ſpiritual; for look as ſpirits ſubſiſt without food, raiment, ſleep, know no laſſitude, wearineſs or pain, ſo our bodies after the reſurrection ſhall be above theſe neceſſities and diſtempers; for we ſhall be as the Angels of God, *Mat.* 22. 30. Yea, our vile bodies ſhall be changed, and made like unto Chriſts glorious body; which is the higheſt pitch, and aſcent of glory and honour, that an humane body is capable of, *Phil.* 3. 21. Indeed the glory of the ſoul ſhall be the greateſt glory; that's the orient invaluable jem; but God will beſtow a diſtinct glory upon the body, and richly enammel the very caſe in which that precious jewel ſhall be kept. In that glorious morning of the reſurrection, the Saints ſhall put on their new freſh ſuits of fleſh, richly laid and trimmed with glory. Thoſe bodies which in the grave were but duſt and rottenneſs, when it delivers them back again, ſhall be ſhining and excellent pieces, abſolutely and everlaſtingly freed. (1) From all natural infirmities and diſtempers; death is their good Phyſician, which at once freed them of all diſeaſes. 'Tis a great Affliction now to many of the Lord's people, to be clog'd with ſo many bodily infirmities which render them very unſerviceable to God. *The ſpirit indeed is willing, but the fleſh is weak.* A crazy body retorts and ſhoots back its diſtempers upon the ſoul with which it is ſo cloſely conjoyned; but though now the ſoul (as *Theophraſtus* ſpeaks) payes a dear rent for the Tabernacle in which it dwells, yet when death diſſolves that Tabernacle, all the diſeaſes and pains under which it groaned ſhall be buried in the rubbiſh of its mortality; and when they come to be re-united again. God will beſtow rich gifts and dowries, even upon the body, in the day of its re-eſpouſals to the ſoul. (2) It ſhall be freed from all deformities, there are no breaches, flaws, monſtroſities in glorified bodies; but of them it may much rather be ſaid, what was once ſaid of *Abſalom*, 2 *Sam.* 14. 25. *That from the crown of his head, to the*

the ſole of his foot; *there was no blemiſh in him.* (3ly) It ſhall be freed from all naturall neceſſities, to which it is now ſubjected in this its animal ſtate. How is the ſoul now diſquieted and tortured with cares and troubles, to provide for a periſhing body? Many unbelieving and unbecoming fears, it is now vexed with. What ſhall it eat? and what ſhall it drink? and wherewithall ſhall it be cloathed? *But meats for the belly, and the belly for meats*; *God ſhall deſtroy both it and them*, 1 *Cor.* 6. 13. (*i. e.*) as to their preſent uſe and office; for as to its exiſtence, ſo the belly ſhall not be deſtroyed. But even as the Maſts, Poop and Stern of a Ship abide in the harbour after the voyage is ended, ſo ſhall theſe bodily members, as *Tertullian* excellently illuſtrates it. (4ly.) They ſhall be freed from death, to which thenceforth they can be ſubject no more; that formidable adverſary of nature ſhall aſſault it no more. *For they which ſhall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the reſurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage, neither can they dye any more*; *for they ſhall be equal to the Angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the reſurrection*, Luk. 20. 35, 36. Mark it, equal to the Angels; not that they ſhall be ſeparate and ſingle ſpirits without bodies, as the Angels are, but equal to them in the way and manner of their living and acting. We ſhall then live upon God, and act freely, purely, and delightfully for God; for all kind of living upon, and delighting in creatures, ſeems in that Text (by a Synechdoche of the part which is ordinarily in Scripture put for all creature-delights, dependencies, and neceſſities) to be excluded. Nothing but God ſhall enamour and fill the ſoul, and the body ſhall be perfectly ſubdued to the ſpirit. Lord, what haſt thou prepared for them that love thee?

Ἰσαγγελῶς βιῶντες.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The healthful Saints Reflection.

If I ſhall receive my body again, ſo dignified and improved in the world to come, then Lord let me never be unwilling to uſe my body now for the intereſt of thy glory, or my own Salvation. Now, O my God, it grieves me to think how

how many precious opportunities of serving and honouring thee, I have lost under pretence of endangering my health.

I have been more solicitous to live long and healthfully, than to live usefully and fruitfully; and like enough my life had been more serviceable to thee, if it had not been so fondly overvalued by me.

Foolish soul, hath God given thee a body for a living tool or instrument? and art thou afraid to use it? wherein is the mercy of having a body, if not in spending and wearing it out in the service of God? to have an active vigorous body, and not to imploy and exercise it for God, for fear of endangering its health, is as if one should give thee a handsom and sprightful horse, upon condition thou shouldst not ride or work him. O! if some of the Saints had enjoyed the blessing of such an healthy active body as mine, what excellent services would they have performed to God in it?

2. The sickly Saints reflection.

If my body shall as surely rise again in glory, vigour and excellent endowments as the seed which I sow doth, why should not this comfort me over all the pains, weaknesses and dulness with which my soul is now clogged? Thou knowest my God, what a grief it hath been to my soul, to be fettered and intangled with the distempers and manifold indispositions of this vile body. It hath made me sigh and say, with holy *Anselme*, when he saw the mounting bird weighed down by the stone hanging at her leg, Lord, thus it fares with the soul of thy servant! fain would I serve, glorifie, and enjoy thee, but a distempered body will not let me. However, it is reviving to think, that though I am now forced to crawl like a worm in the discharge of my duties, I shall shortly fly like a Seraphim in the execution of thy will. Cheer up drooping soul, the time is at hand, when thou shalt be made more willing than thou art, and thy flesh not so weak as now it is.

3. The dying Saints Reflection.

And is it so indeed? then let the dying Saint like *Jacob* rouze up himself upon his bed, and incourage himself against the fears of death by this refreshing consideration. Let him say with holy dying *Musculus*, Why trembleſt thou (O my soul) to go forth of this Tabernacle to the Land of

reſt? hath thy body been ſuch a pleaſant habitation to thee, that thou ſhouldſt be ſo loath to part with it, though but for a time? and with aſſurance of receiving it again with ſuch a glorious improvement? I know (O my ſoul) that thou haſt a natural inclination to this body, reſulting from the dear and ſtrict union which God himſelf hath made betwixt thee and it! yea, even the holieſt of men do ſometimes ſenſibly feel the like in themſelves; but beware thou love it not immoderately or inordinately; 'tis but a creature, how dear ſoever it be to thee: yea, a fading creature, and that which now ſtands in thy way to the full enjoyment of God. But ſay my ſoul, why are the thoughts of parting with it ſo burdenſom to thee? Why ſo loath to take death by its cold hand? Is this body thy old and dear friend? True, but yet thou parteſt not with it upon ſuch ſad terms, as ſhould deſerve a tear at parting. For mayeſt thou not ſay of this departure, as *Paul* of the departure of *Oneſimus*, Philem. *v.* 15. *It therefore departeth for a ſeaſon that thou mayeſt it receive for ever.* The day of re-eſpouſals will quickly come, and in the mean time as thy body ſhall not be ſenſible of the tedious length of interpoſing time, ſo neither ſhalt thou be ſolicitous about thine abſent friend: for the fruition of God in that thine unbodied ſtate, ſhall fill thee with infinite ſatisfaction and reſt.

Or is it not ſo much ſimply for parting with it, as for the manner of thy parting, either by the ſlow and lingring approaches of a natural, or the quick and terrible approaches of a violent death: Why, trouble not thy ſelf about that; for if God lead thee through the long dark lane of a tedious ſickneſs, yet at the end of it is thy fathers houſe. And for a violent death 'tis not ſo material, whether friends or enemies ſtand weeping or triumphing over thy dead body. *Nihil corpus ſentit in nervo cum anima ſit in cœlo.* When thy ſoul ſhall be in heaven, 'twill not be ſenſible how the body is uſed on earth.

4. The ungodly ſouls Reflection

But oh! what an uncomfortable parting will mine be? and how muh more ſad our meeting again! how will this ſoul and body bluſh, yea tremble when they meet, who have been

been copartners in so much guilt? I damn'd my soul, to please my flesh, and now have ruin'd both thereby: had I denied my flesh to serve Christ, worn out my body in the service of my soul; I had thereby happily provided for them both, but I began at the wrong end, and so have ruin'd both eternally.

The *POEM.*

BAre seeds have no great beauty, but inhum'd
That which they had is lost; and consum'd
They soon (*a*) corrupt, and grow more base by odds
When dead; and buried underneath the clods.
It falls in (*b*) baseness, but at length doth rise
In glory; which delights beholders eyes.
How great a difference have a few dayes made
Betwixt it, in the bushel, and the blade!
This lovely, lively emblem aptly may
Type out the glorious Resurrection day.
Wherein the Saints that in the dust do lye,
Shall rise in glory, vigour, dignity.
With singing in that (*c*) morning they arise,
And (*d*) dazling glory, such as mortal eyes
Ne're viewed on earth: The sparkling beauties here,
No more can equalize their splendor there:
Than glimmering glow-worms do the fairest star,
That shines in heaven; or the stones that are
In every street, may competition hold
With glittering diamonds in rings of gold.
For unto (*e*) Christ's most glorious body they
Shall be conform'd in glory, at that day;
Whose lustre would, should it on mortals fall,
Transport a *Stephen*, and confound a *Paul*.
'Tis now a course, and crazy house of clay;
But O! how dear do souls for lodging pay!

(*a*) Joh. 12.24.
(*b*) 1 Cor. 15. 43.
(*c*) Psa. 49. 14.
(*d*) Mat. 13. 43
(*e*) Phil. 3. 21.

Few more than I, for thou my soul hast bin
Within these tents of *Kedar* cooped in.
Where with distempers clog'd, thou mak'st thy moans,
And for deliverance with tears and groans;
Hast often sued, cheer up, the (*f*) time will be
When thou from all these troubles shalt be free.
No jarring humours, cloudy vapours, rheums,
Pain, aches, or what ever else consumes
My dayes in grief; whil'st in the Christian race,
Flesh lags behind; (*g*) and can't keep equal pace
With the more willing spirit: none of these,
Shall thenceforth clog thee, or disturb thine ease.

(*f*) Rev. 7.17.

(*g*) Mat. 26.41

CHAP. XII.

Upon the resemblance of wheat and tares.

As wheat resembled is by viler tares,
So vile hypocrisie like grace appears.

OBSERVATION.

IT is *Jeroms* Observation, that wheat and tares are so much alike in their first springing up, that it is exceeding difficult to distinguish the one from the other. These are his words, *Inter triticum & lolium quamdiu herba est, & nondum culmus venit ad spicam; grandis similitudo est: & indiscernendo aut nulla, aut perdifficilis distantia.* The difference (saith he) between them is either none at all, or wonderful difficult to discern, which those words of Christ, *Mat.* 13. 30. plainly confirm. Let them both alone till the Harvest; thereby intimating, both the difficulty of distinguishing the tares and wheat; as also, the unwarrantable rashness of bold and hasty censures of mens sincerity or hypocrisie, which is there shadowed by them.

AP-

APPLICATION.

HOw difficult ſoever it be to diſcern the difference betwixt wheat and tares; yet doubtleſs the eye of ſence can much eaſier diſcriminate them, than the moſt quick and piercing eye of man can diſcern the difference betwixt ſpecial and common grace: for all ſaving graces in the Saints have their counterfeits in hypocrites. There are *ſimilar works in theſe*, which a ſpiritual and very judicious eye may eaſily miſtake for the *ſaving and genuine effects* of the ſanctifying Spirit.

Doth the Spirit of God convince the conſciences of his people, of the evil of ſin? *Rom.* 7. 9. Hypocrites have their convictions too, *Exod.* 10. 16. *Then* Pharoah *called for* Moſes *and* Aaron *in haſte, and he ſaid, I have ſinned againſt the Lord your God, and againſt you.* Thus was *Saul* alſo convicted, 1 *Sam.* 15. 24.

Doth true conviction and compunction work reformation of life, in the people of God? even hypocrites alſo have been famous for their reformations. The unclean ſpirit often goes out of the formal hypocrite, by an external reformation; and yet ſtill retains his propriety in them, *Mat.* 12. 43, 44. For that departure is indeed no more than a politick retreat. Many that ſhall never eſcape the damnation of hell, have yet eſcaped the pollutions of the world, and that by the knowledge of the Son of God, 2 *Pet.* 2. 20

Doth the Spirit of the Lord produce that glorious and ſupernatural work of faith, in convinced and humbled ſouls? in this alſo the hypocrite apes and imitates the believer, *Acts* 8. 13. *Then* Simon *himſelf believed alſo*, Luke 8. 13. *Theſe are they which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.*

Doth the precious eye of faith diſcovering the tranſcendent excellencies that are in Chriſt, inflame the affections of the believing ſoul with vehement deſires and longings after him? Strange motions of heart have alſo been found in hypocrites

pocrites towards Christ and heavenly things, *John* 6.34. *Lord evermore give us this bread*, Mat. 25. 8. *Give us of your oyl, for our lamps are gone out.* With what a rapture was *Balaam* transported, when he said, *Let me dye the death of the righteous, and my last end be like his?* Numb. 23. 10.

Doth the work of faith in some believers bear upon its top branches, the full ripe fruits of a blessed assurance? Lo! What strong confidences, and high built perswasions of an interest in God, have sometimes been found, even in unsanctified ones? *Joh.* 8. 54. *Of whom you say, that he is your God, and yet ye have not known him.* To the same height of confidence arrived those vain souls, mentioned in *Rom.* 2. 19. Yea, so strong may this false assurance be, that they dare boldly venture to go to the judgment seat of God, and there defend it, *Mat.* 7. 22. *Lord, Lord, have we not prophecyed in thy name?*

Doth the Spirit of God fill the heart of the assured believer with joy unspeakable and full of glory, giving them through faith a prelibation or foretaste of heaven it self, in those first fruits of it? How near to this comes that which the Apostle supposes may be found even in Apostates! *Heb.* 6. 8, 9. who are there said, *to taste the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come.* What shall I say, if real Christians delight in Ordinances, those that are none may also delight in approaching to God, *Ezek.* 33. 32. It may be you will say, though the difference be not easily discernable in their active obedience; yet, when it shall come to suffering, there every eye may discern it: the false heart will then flinch, and cannot brook that work. And yet, even this is no infallible rule neither; for the Apostle supposes, that the *Salamander* of hypocrisie may live in the very flames of Martyrdom, 1 *Cor.* 13. 3. *If I give my body to to be burnt, and have not charity.* And it was long since determined in this case, *Non pœna, sed causa facit Martyrem*; so that without controversie, the difficulty of distinguishing them is very great.

And this difference will yet be more subtile and undiscernable, if I should tell you, that in so many things, the hypo-

hypocrite reſembles the Saint: ſo there are other things in which a real Chriſtian may act too like an hypocrite. When we find a *Pharoah* confeſſing, an *Herod* practiſing, as well as hearing, a *Judas* preaching Chriſt, an *Alexander* ventring his life for *Paul*; and on the other ſide, ſhall find a *David* condemning that in another, which he practiſed himſelf; an *Hezekiah* glorying in his riches, a *Peter* diſſembling, and even all the Diſciples forſaking *Chriſt* in an hour of trouble and danger. O then! how hard is it for the eye of man to diſcern betwixt chaff and wheat? how many upright hearts are now cenſured, whom God will clear? how many falſe hearts are now approved, whom God will condemn? men ordinarily have no clear convictive proofs, but only probable ſymptoms, which at moſt can beget but a conjectural knowledge of anothers ſtate. And they that ſhall peremptorily judge either way, may poſſibly wrong the generation of the upright; or on the other ſide, abſolve and juſtifie the wicked. And truly, conſidering what hath been ſaid it is no great wonder that dangerous miſtakes are ſo frequently made in this matter. But though man cannot, the Lord both can, and will perfectly diſcriminate them. *The Lord knoweth who are his*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. He will have a day perfectly to ſever the tares from the wheat, to melt off the varniſh of the moſt reſplendent and refined hypocrite, and to blow off the aſhes of infirmities, which have covered and obſcured the very ſparks of ſincerity in his people. He will make ſuch a diviſion as was never yet made in the world, how many diviſions ſoever there have been in it. *And then ſhall men indeed return, and diſcern betwixt the righteous and the wicked; betwixt him that ſerveth God, and him that ſerveth him not.* Mean while (my ſoul) thou canſt not better imploy thy ſelf, whether thou be ſound or unſound, than in making theſe reflections upon thy ſelf.

REFLECTIONS.

The cenſorious ſouls Reflection.

AND is this ſo? then Lord, pardon the raſhneſs and precipitancy of my cenſorious ſpirit; for I have often boldly

boldly anticipated thy judgment, and assumed thy prerogative, although thou hast said, *Why dost thou judge thy brother? and why dost thou set at nought thy brother? we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ; for it is written, as I live saith the Lord every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. Let us not therefore judge one another any more*, Rom. 14. 10,11,12,13. And again, *He that judgeth me is the Lord. Let us therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the heart; and then shall every man have praise of God*, 1 Cor. 4.4,5.

What if God will own some of them for his Sons, to whom I refuse to give the respect of brethren? I may pass hasty and headlong censures upon others, but where is my commission for so doing? I want not only a commission, but fit qualifications for such a work as this. Can I pierce into the heart as God? can I infallibly discover the hidden motives, ends, and principles of actions? Besides, O my soul! thou art conscious of so much falsness in thy self, that were there no other consideration, that alone might rest a in thee from all uncharitable and hasty censures. If others knew but what I know of my self, would they not judge as severely of me, as I do of others?

I. The presumptuous Souls Reflection.

Though I may not judge the final state of another, yet I may and ought to judge the state of my own soul; which is doubtless a more necessary and concerning work to me. For since every saving grace in a Christian hath its counterfeit in the hypocrite, how needful is it, for thee, (O my soul) to make a stand here, and solemnly to ponder this great question! whether those things whereon I depend as my best evidences for the life to come, be the real, or only the common works of the Spirit? whether they be such as can now endure the test of the Word, and abide a fair tryal at the bar of my own conscience?

Come then, my soul! set the Lord before thee, to whom the secrets of all hearts are manifest; and in the awful sence of that great day, make true answer to these heart-discovering querics; for though thou canst not discern the difference

difference betwixt theſe things in another, yet thou mayeſt and oughteſt to diſcern it in thy ſelf; for what man knows the things of a man, ſave the ſpirit of man that is in him?

1. Firſt, Is my obedience uniform? am I the ſame man in all times, places and companies? or rather, am I not exact and curious in open and publick; remiſs and careleſs, in private and ſecret duties? ſincere ſouls are uniform ſouls, *Pſa.* 119. 6. the hypocrite is no cloſet-man, *Mat.* 6. 5.

2. Secondly, Doth that which I call grace in me, oppoſe and mortifie, or doth it not rather quietly conſiſt with, and protect my luſts and corruptions? true grace tollerates no luſt, *Gal.* 5. 17. No, not the boſom darling-corruption, *Pſa.* 18. 23.

3. Thirdly, Doth that which I call my grace, humble, empty and abaſe my ſoul? or rather, doth it not puff it up with ſelf-conceitedneſs? all ſaving grace is humbling grace, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. *But the ſoul which is lifted up, is not upright,* Hab. 2. 4.

4. Laſtly, Canſt thou (my ſoul) rejoyce and bleſs God for the grace imparted to others? and rejoyce, if any deſign for *Chriſt* be carried on in the world by other hands? or rather, doſt thou not envy thoſe that excel thee, and careſt for no work in which thou art not ſeen?

But ſtay my ſoul, it is enough: If theſe be the ſubſtantial differences betwixt ſpecial and common grace, I more than doubt, I ſhall not endure the day of his coming, *Whoſe fan is in his hand.* Do not thoſe ſpots appear upon me, which are not the ſpots of his children? Wo is me, poor wretch, the characters of death are upon my ſoul! Lord, add power to the form, life to the name to live, practiſe to the knowledge, or I periſh eternally! O rather give me the *Saints heart*, than the *Angels tongue*; the pooreſt breathing of thy Spirit, than the richeſt ornaments of common gifts! let me neither deceive my ſelf or others, in matters of ſo deep and everlaſting conſequence!

The *POEM.*

IN Eaſtern Countreys, as good Authors write,
Tares in their ſpringing up appear to ſight;
Not like it ſelf, a weed; but real wheat;
Whoſe ſhape, and form it counterfeits ſo neat;
That 'twould require a moſt judicious eye,
The one from t'other to diverſifie.
Till both to ſome maturity be grown,
And then the difference is eas'ly known.
Even thus (1) hypocriſie that curſed weed,
(1) Mat. 13. 30 Springs up ſo like true grace, that he will need
More than a common inſight in this caſe,
That ſaith this is not, that is real grace.
Ne're did the cunning Actor, though a ſlave
Array'd in princely robes; himſelf behave
So like a King; as this doth act the part
Of ſaving grace, by its deep helliſh art.
(2) Luk. 7. 38. Do gracious ſouls (2) melt, mourn and weep for ſin?
(3) Sam. 15. 23. The like in (3) hypocrites obſerv'd hath been.
(4) 1 Pet. 1. 8. Have they their (4) comforts, joyes, and raptures ſweet?
(5) Joh. 5 33. With them in comforts (5) hypocrites do meet.
In all religious duties, they can go
(6) Num. 24. 4 As far as Saints; in ſomethings farther too.
They ſpeak like Angels, (6) and you'l think within
The very ſpirit of Chriſt; and grace hath bin.
They come ſo neer, that ſome like *Iſaac* take
Jacob for *Eſau*; this, for that miſtake.
And boldly call (their eyes with his being dim)
True grace hypocriſie, and duty ſin.
Yea, many alſo *Jacob* like imbrace
Leah for *Rachel* common gifts for grace.
And in their boſoms hug it, till the light
Diſcover their miſtake; and cleer their ſight.
And then like him, confounded they will cry,
Alas! 'tis *Leah*, curs'd hypocriſie.

Guide

Guide me my God, that I may not in stead
Of saving grace, nurse up this cursed weed.
O let my heart by thee at last be found
Sincere, and all thy workings on it sound.

CHAP. XIII.

Fowls, weeds, and blastings do your corn annoy;
Even so corruptions would your grace destroy.

Upon the dangers incident to corn, from seed-time to Harvest.

OBSERVATION.

THere are (amongst many others) three critical and dangerous periods, betwixt the seed-time and Harvest. The first, when corn is newly committed to the earth, all that lyes uncovered is quickly pickt up by the birds; and much of that which is but slightly covered, is stockt up as soon as it begins to sprout, by Rooks and other devouring fowls. *Mat.* 13. 4. but if it escape the fowls, and gets root in the earth, yet then is it hazarded by noxious weeds, which purloin and suck away its nourishment, whilst it is yet in the tender blade. If by the care of the vigilant Husbandman it be freed from choaking weeds; yet lastly, as great a danger as any of the former still attends it; for oftentimes, whilst it is blowing in the ear, blastings, and mildews, smite it in the stalk, which cuts off the juice and sap that should ascend to nourish the ear; and so shrivels and dries up the grain whilst it is yet immature, whereby it becomes like those ears of corn in *Pharaohs* vision, which were thin, and blasted with the East-wind; or like the ears the *Psalmist* speaks of upon the house top, wherewith the reaper filleth not his arms.

APPLICATION.

TRue grace from the infancy to the perfection thereof, conflicts with far more greater dangers, amongſt which it anſwerably meets with three dangerous periods which marvellouſly hazard it: So that it is a much greater wonder that it ever arrives at its juſt perfection. For (1) no ſooner hath the great Husbandman diſſeminated theſe holy ſeeds in the regenerate heart, but multitudes of impetuous corruptions immediately aſſault, and would certainly devour them like the fowls of the air, did not the ſame arm that ſowed them, alſo protect them. It fares with grace, as with *Chriſt* its Author, whom *Herod* ſought to deſtroy in his very infancy. The new creature is ſcarce warm in its ſeat, before it muſt fight to defend its ſelf. This conflict is excellently ſet forth in that famous Text, *Gal.* 5. 17. *The fleſh luſteth againſt the ſpirit, and the ſpirit againſt the fleſh, and theſe are contrary the one to the other; ſo that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*

By *fleſh* here, underſtand the corruption of nature by original ſin, and the ſinful motions thereof; by *ſpirit*, not the ſoul, or natural ſpirit of man, but the Spirit of God in man, *viz.* thoſe graces in men which are the workmanſhip of the Spirit, and therefore called by his name. The oppoſition betwixt theſe two is expreſſed by luſting (*i.e.*) deſiring the mutual ruine and deſtruction of each other; for even when they are not acting, yet then they are luſting, there is an oppoſite diſpoſition againſt each other; which oppoſition is both a *formal* and an *effective* oppoſition. There are two contrary forms, two men in every Saint, *Col.* 3. 9, 10. From hence an effective oppoſition muſt needs follow; for as things are in their natures and principles, ſo they are in their operations and effects; workings alwayes follow beings; fire and water are of contrary qualities, and when they meet, they effectively oppoſe each other. Sin and grace are ſo oppoſite, that if ſin ſhould ceaſe to oppoſe grace, it would ceaſe to be ſin; and if grace ſhould not oppoſe ſin, it

it would ceaſe to be grace. And this doth much more endanger the work of grace, than any other enemy it hath; becauſe it works againſt it more *inwardly*, *conſtantly*, and *advantagiouſly*, than any thing elſe can do. (1) More inwardly, for it hath its being and working in the ſame ſoul where grace dwells, yea, in the ſelf ſame faculties, ſo that it not only ſets one faculty againſt another, but the ſame faculty againſt it ſelf, the underſtanding againſt the underſtanding, and the will againſt the will, ſo that ye cannot do the good, nor yet the evil that ye would; not the good that ye would, becauſe when the ſpirit moves to good, and beats upon the heart by divine palſations, exciting it to duty, the fleſh croſſes and oppoſes it there; and if it cannot totally hinder the performance of a duty, yet it lames the ſoul upon the working hand, whereby the performance is not ſo ſpiritual, free and compoſed, as it deſires; nor yet the evil that you would commit, if grace were not there, becauſe when luſt ſtirs in its firſt motions, grace puts a rub in its way. *How can I do this great wickedneſs, and ſin againſt God?* Gen. 39. 9. And if it cannot (which for the moſt part it doth) hinder the acting of ſin, yet it ſo ingages the will againſt it, that it is not committed with complacency and full conſent, *Rom.* 7. 15. *What I do, I allow not.* (2) It oppoſes it more *conſtantly*, it's like a continual drooping; a man can no more flie from this enemy, than from himſelf. There is a time when the devil leaves tempting, *Mat.* 4. 11. but no time when corruption ceaſes from working. And laſtly, it oppoſes grace more *advantagiouſly* than any other enemy can do, for it is not only alwayes in the ſame ſoul with it, but it is there naturally; it hath the advantage of the ſoyl which ſuits with it. And yet, oh the wonder of free grace! it is not ſwallowed up in victory, it eſcapes this hazard.

But (2ly.) it ſoon meets with another, though it eſcape this, even by temptations which ſtrike deſperately at the very life of it; for theſe like the weeds, with ſeemingly loving imbraces, claſp about it; and did not the faithful God now make a way to eſcape, inſtead of an Harveſt, we ſhould have an heap? For, alas, what are we! to wreſtle with

with principalities and powers, and ſpiritual wickedneſſes in high places?

Laſtly, ſad relapſes like blaſts and ruſtings do oft (n ſa and greatly endanger it, when it's even ready for the Harveſt. Thus it fell out with *David*, whoſe laſt wayes were not like his firſt; and yet by this, theſe holy fruits are not utterly deſtroyed, becauſe it is the ſeed of God; and ſo is immortal, 1 *John* 5. 4, 5. and alſo becauſe the promiſes of perſeverance and victory made to it, cannot be fruſtrated; amongſt which theſe are excellent, *Iſa.* 54. 10. *Jer.* 34. 40. 1 *Cor.* 1. 8. *Pſal.* 1. 3. *Pſal.* 125. 1. *Joh.* 4. 14. So that here is matter of unſpeakable comfort; though the fleſh ſay, *Ego deficiam*, I will fail thee; though the world ſay, *Ego decipiam*, I will deceive thee; though the devil ſay, *Ego eripiam*, I will ſnatch thee away; yet as long as *Chriſt* ſaith, I will never leave thee nor forſake thee; thy graces are ſecure, in the midſt of all theſe enemies.

REFLECTIONS.

I. The Apoſtates Reflection.

THis ſoul of mine was once plowed up by conviction, and ſown (as I thought) with the ſeed of God. In thoſe dayes many purpoſes and good reſolutions began to chink and bud forth, promiſing a bleſſed Harveſt: but O! (with what conſternation and horror ſhould I ſpeak it?) the cares and pleaſures of this life, the luſts and corruptions of my baſe heart ſpringing up, have quite deſtroyed and choakt it; by which it appears, it was not the ſeed of God, as I then imagined it to be; and now my expected Harveſt ſhall be an heap, in the day of grief, and deſperate ſorrow, *Iſa.* 17. 11. I had convictions, but they are gone: troables for ſin, conſcience of duties, but all is blaſted, and my ſoul is now as a barren field, which God hath curſed.

Wo is me! I have revolted from God, and now that dreadful word, *Jer.* 17. 5, 6. is evidently fulfilled upon me; *For I am like the heath in the deſart, that ſeeth not when good cometh; my ſoul inhabits the parched places of the wilderneſs.* Alas! all my formal and heartleſs duties were but as ſo many

ſcare-

ſcare-crows in the field, which could not defend theſe ſlight workings from being devoured by the infernal fowls. Had theſe principles been the ſeed of God, no doubt they would have continued and overcome the world, 1 *Joh.*2.19. Wretched ſoul! thy caſe is ſad, it will be better with the uncultivated wilderneſs, than with ſuch a miſcarrying ſoyl, unleſs the great Husbandman plow thee up the ſecond time, and ſow thy heart with better ſeed.

2. The careleſs ſoul's Reflection.

And are the corruptions of my heart to grace, what fowls, weeds, and mildews are to the corn? O what need have I then to watch my heart, and keep it with all diligence; for in the life of that grace is wrapt up the life of my ſoul. He that carries a candle in his hand in a bluſtring ſtormy night, had need to cover it cloſe, leſt it be blown out, and he left in darkneſs. O let me never ſay, God hath promiſed it ſhall perſevere, and therefore I need not be ſo ſolicitous to preſerve it; for as this inference is quite oppoſite to the nature of true grace and aſſurance, which never incourage to careleſsneſs, but provoke the ſoul to an induſtrious uſe of means to preſerve it. So, it is in it ſelf an irrational and ſenſleſs concluſion, which will never follow from any Scripture promiſe: for although it is readily granted, that God hath made many comfortable and ſweet promiſes to the graces of his people, yet we muſt expect to enjoy the benefits & bleſſings of all thoſe promiſes, in that way and order in which God ha h promiſed them; and that is in the careful and diligent uſe of thoſe means which he hath preſcribed, *Ezek.* 36. 36, 37. for promiſes do not exclude, but imply the uſe of means, *Act.* 27. 31. I know my life is determined to a day, to an hour, and I ſhall live out every minute God hath appointed; but yet, I am bound to provide food, raiment and phyſick to preſerve it.

The doubting ſoul's Reflection.

To conclude, let all doubting Chriſtians reflect ſeriouſly upon this truth, and ſuck marrow and fatneſs out of it to ſtrengthen and eſtabliſh them againſt all their fears; your life, your ſpiritual life, hath for many years hanged in ſuſpence before you; and you have often ſaid with *David*, I ſhall one day fall by the hand of *Saul*. Deſponding, trembling

bling ſoul, lift up thine eyes and look upon the fields; the corn lives ſtill, and grows up: though birds have watcht to devour it, ſnows have covered it, beaſts have cropt it, weeds have almoſt choakt it, yet it's preſerved. And hath not God more care of that precious ſeed of his own ſpirit in thee, than any Husbandman hath of his corn? hath he not ſaid, *That having begun the good work in thee, he will perfect it to the day of Chriſt*? Phil. 1. 6. Hath he not ſaid, *I give unto them eternal life, and they ſhall never periſh*? John 10. 28. Haſt thou not many times ſaid, and thought of it, as thou doſt now, and yet it lives? O, what matter of unſpeakable joy and comfort is this to upright ſouls! Well then, be not diſcouraged, for thou doſt not run as one uncertain, nor fight as one that beats the air, 1 *Cor.* 9. 26. but the foundation of God ſtands ſure, having this ſeal, the Lord knows who are his, 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. Though thy grace be weak, thy God is ſtrong; though the ſtream ſeem ſometimes to fail, yet it's fed by an ever flowing fountain.

The *Poem*.

'Tis juſtly wondered that an ear of corn,
Should come at laſt in ſafety to the Barn.
It runs through many hazards, threatning harms
Betwixt the ſowers hands, and reapers arms.
The earth no ſooner takes it from the ſack
But you may ſee behind the ſowers back
A troop of (1) thieves, which would at once deſtroy
(1) Mat. 13. 4, 5 That ſeed in which lyes hid the ſeed of joy.
This dangerous period paſt, it ſoon doth fall
Into a ſecond, no leſs critical.
It ſhooteth forth the tender blade, and then;
(2) Mat. 13. 7. The noxious (2) weeds endanger it agen.
Theſe claſp about it till they kindly choak
The corn, as flattering Ivy doth the Oak.

Are

Are weeds destroyed, and all that danger past?
Lo now another comes, the worst at last.
For when i'th' ear it blows, begins to kern,
A mildew (3) smites it which you can't discern;
Nor any way prevent, till all be lost;
The corn destroy'd, with all your hopes and cost.
Thus saving grace, that precious seed of joy;
Which hell and nature (4) plot how to destroy,
Escapes ten thousand (5) danger's first and last.
O who can say now all the danger's past?
'Tis like a crazy bark tost in a storm,
Or like a tapor which is strangely born
Without a Lanthorn, in a blustring night;
Or like to glimmering sparks whose dying light
Is still preserv'd: The roaring waves swell high
Like moving mountains in the darkned sky
On their proud backs, the little Bark is even
Mounted unto the battlements of heaven,
From thence dismounted to the deeps doth slide
Receiving water upon every side;
Yet he whose voice the proudest waves obey
Brings it at last unto the quiet key.
The blustring winds strive with a fatal puff,
To bring the tapor to a stinking snuff;
Their churlish blasts extinguish it, and then
Our gentle breath recovers it agen.
The fainting sparks beneath the ashes lye,
Where choakt, and smother'd they begin to dye;
But these collected, we do gently blow,
Till from faint sparks to lively flames they grow.
Even thus is grace preserv'd, thus kept alive;
By Constant wonders, grace doth live and thrive,

(3) Hag 2.16, 17.
(4) Gal. 5.17.
(5) Rev. 3.2.

CHAP. XIV.

Upon the patience of the Husbandman for the harvest.

Our Husbandmen for Harvest wait and stay,
O let not any Saint do less than they.

OBSERVATION.

THe expectation of a good Harvest at last, makes the Husbandman with untired patience to digest all his labours. He that plows, plows in hope, 1 *Cor.* 6.19. and they are not so irrational to think, they shall presently be partakers of their hope, nor so fooliſh to anticipate the Harvest, by cutting down their corn before it be fully ripened, but are content to plow, sow and weed it; and when it's fully ripe, then they go forth into their fields and reap it down with joy.

APPLICATION.

CAn a little corn cause men to digest so many difficult labours, and make them wait with invincible patience till the reaping time come? much more should the expectation of eternal glory steel and fortifie my spirit against all intercurrent hardships and difficulties. It least of all becomes a Christian to be of an hasty and impatient spirit. *Light is sown for the righteous. and joy for the upright in heart*, Psal. 92. 11. *Behold the Husbandman waiteth*, &c. Jam. 5. 7. *Be patient therefore my Brethren, for the coming of the Lord draws neer.* There are three great Arguments to perswade Christians to a long suffering and patient frame under sufferings. (1) The example of Christ, *Isa* 53. 7. to think how quietly he suffered all injuries and difficulties with invincible patience, is sufficient to shame the best of Christians, who are of such short spirits. I have read of one *Elezarius* a noble man

man, that when his wife wondered at his exceeding great patience in bearing injuries; he thus answered her, You know sometimes my heart is ready to rise with indignation against such as wrong me, but I presently begin to think of the wrongs that Christ suffer'd, and say thus to my self, although thy servant should pluck thy beard, and smite thee on thy face, this were nothing to what thy Lord suffer'd: he suffered more and greater things; and assure your self (wife) I never leave off thinking on the injuries done to my Saviour, till such time as my mind be still and quiet. To this purpose it was well noted by *Bernard*, speaking of Christ's humiliation; Was Christ the Lord of glory thus humbled and emptied of his fulness of glory? and shall such a worm as I swell? (2) The desert of sin, *Lam.* 3. 39. *Why doth the living man complain?* It was a good saying of blessed *Greenham*: When sin lyes heavy, affliction lyes light. And it is a famous instance which Dr. *Taylor* gives us of the *Duke* of *Candey*; I have read (saith he) when the *Duke* of *Condia* had voluntarily entred into the incommodities of a religious poverty and retirement; he was one day spied and pitied by a Lord of *Italy*, who out of tenderness wisht him to be more careful and nutritrive of his person; the good *Duke* answered, Sir, be not troubled, and think not, that I am ill provided of conveniences, for I send an Harbinger before me that makes ready my lodgings, and takes care that I be royally entertained. The Lord asked him, who was his Harbinger? he answered, the knowledge of my self, and the consideration of what I deserve for my sins, which is eternal torments; and when with this knowledge I arrive at my lodgings, how unprovided soever I find it, methinks it is ever better than I deserve; and as the sense of sin, which merits hell, sweetens present difficulties: So, (to come home to the present similitude) do the expectations, and hopes of a blessed harvest, and reward in heaven. This made *Abraham* willing to wander up and down many years as a stranger in the world; for he looked for a City that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. The hopes of such a Harvest is incouragement enough to work hard, and wait long; yet

Dr. *Taylors* great Exemplar, *p.* 103.

some Christians are so impatient of it, that they would fain be reaping before the time; but as God hath by an unalterable law of nature, appointed both the seasons of seed-time and harvest (which are therefore called the appointed weeks of the harvest) *Jer.* 5. 24. and these cannot be hasten'd; but when we have done all that we can on our part, must wait till God send the former and latter rain, and given every natural cause its effect. So is it in reference to our spiritual harvest, we are appointed to sweat in the use of all God's appointments, and when we have done all, must patiently wait till the divine decrees be accomplished, and the time of the promise be fully come; In due time we shall reap, if we faint not. To which patient expectation, and quiet waiting for the glory to come, these following considerations are of excellent use.

1. As the Husbandman knows when the seed-time is past, it will not be long to the harvest; and the longer he waits, the neerer still it is. So the Christian knows, *It is but yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry*, Heb. 10.37. *And that now his salvation is nearer than when he first believed* Rom. 13. 11. What a small point of time is our waiting time, compared with eternity? yet a few dayes more, and then comes the long expected and welcome harvest.

2. The Husbandman can find other work to do, before the reaping time come; he need not stand idle, though he cannot yet reap. And cannot a Christian find any work to do for God, till he come to heaven? O, there is much work to do, and such work as is only proper to this season. You may now reprove sin, exhort to duty, succour the distressed; this is good work, and this is your only time for such work; the whole of eternity will be taken up in other imployments, *I think it meet* (saith *Peter*) *as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir up your minds, knowing shortly, that I must put off this tabernacle*, 2 *Pet.* 1. 13. 14. *q. d.* I know I have but a little time to work among you, I am almost at heaven; and therefore am willing to husband this present moment as well as I can for you. O Christians! you need not stand idle, look round about

about you upon the multitude of forlorn sinners, speak now to them for God, speak now to God for them; for shortly you shall so speak no more, you shall see them no more till you see them at Christ's bar; God leaves you here for their sakes, up and be doing: If you had done all you were to do for your selves and them, he would have you to heaven immediately, you should not wait a moment longer for your glory.

3. Husbandmen know, though they cannot yet gather in the precious fruits of the earth, yet all this while they are ripening and preparing for the harvest; they would not house it green, or take it before its time. And is not this also my preparation time for glory? As God prepared heaven for his people, by an eternal *decree*, Mat. 25.34. by an act of *creation*, Heb. 11. 10. by the death of Christ, which made a purchase of it, *Heb.* 10. 19,20. and by his ascension into it, *Joh.* 14.2,3. So the reason why we are kept here, is in order to our fitting for it. Heaven is ready, but we are not fully ready; the Barn is fit to receive the corn, but the corn is not yet fit to be gathered into it. *But for this self-same thing God is now working us*, 2 Cor. 5. 5. he is every day at work, by Ordinances, and by providences, to perfect his work in us; and as soon as that is finished, we shall hear a voice like that, *Rev.* 11. 12. *Come up hither, and immediately we shall be in the spirit*: for how ardently soever we long for that desirable day, Christ longs for it more than we can do.

4. The Husbandman is glad of the first fruits, that incourages him, though the greatest part be yet out; and have not you received the first fruits of that glory? have you no earnests, pledges, and first fruits of it? 'Tis your own fault, if every day you feed not upon such blessed comforts of the spirit, *Rom.* 8.23. *Rom.* 5. 2. 1 *Pet.* 8,9. O how might the interposing time, even all the dayes of your patience here, be sweetned with such prelibations of the glory to come!

5. Husbandmen know 'tis best to reap, when 'tis fit to reap, one handful fully ripe, is worth many sheaves of green corn. And you know, heaven will be sweetest to you, when you are fittest for it; the child would pluck the apple while it's green,

green, but he might gather it easier, and taste it sweeter, by tarrying longer for it. We would fain be glorified *per saltum*. When we have got a taste of heaven, we are all in haste to be gone. Then, O that I had wings as a dove! I would flie away, and be at rest. Then we cry to God for our selves, as *Moses* for his sister *Miriam*, *Heal her* [*now*] *O God, I beseech thee*, Num. 12. 13. Glorifie me now, O Lord, I pray thee! But surely, as God hath contrived thy glory in the best of wayes, so he hath appointed for thee the fittest of seasons; and when ever thou art gathered into glory, thou shalt come as a shock of corn in its season.

REFLECTIONS.

I. The longing Soul's Reflection.

I Have waited for thy salvation, O God! Having received thy first fruits, my soul longs to fill its bosom with the full ripe sheaves of glory. *As the Hart panteth for the water brooks, so panteth my soul for thee, O God!* O, when shall I come and appear before God? I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ. When shall I see that most lovely face? When shall I hear his soul-transporting voice? Some need patience to dye, I need it as much to live! Thy sights, O God, by faith, have made this world a burden, this body a burden, and this soul to cry like thirsty *David*, O that one would give me of the waters of *Bethlehem* to drink! The Husbandman longs for his harvest, because it is the reward of all his toyl and labour; but what is his harvest to mine? what is a little corn to the enjoyment of God? what is the joy of harvest, to the joy of heaven? what are the shoutings of men in the fields, to the acclamations of glorified spirits in the kingdom of God? Lord, I have gone forth bearing more precious seed than they; when shall I return rejoyceing, bringing my sheaves with me? Their harvest comes when they receive their corn, mine comes when I leave it. O much desired harvest! O day of the gladness of my heart! How long Lord! How long! Here I wait as the poor man at *Bethesda's pool*, looking when my turn will come, but every one steps into heaven before me; yet Lord, I am content

content to wait till my time be fully come. I would be content to stay for my *glorification*, till I have finisht the work of my *generation*; and when I have done the will of God, then to receive the promise. If thou have any work on earth to use me in, I am content to abide: Behold, the Husbandman waiteth, and so will I; for thou art a God of judgement, and blessed are all they that wait for thee.

2. The lingring soul's Reflection

But how doth my sloathful soul sink down into the flesh, and settle it self in the love of this animal life? How doth it hug, and wrap up it self in the garment of this mortality, not desiring to be removed hence, to the more perfect and blessed state? The Husbandman indeed is content to stay till the appointed weeks of the Harvest; but would he be content to wait alwayes? O my sensual heart! is this life of hope as contentful to thee, as the life of vision will be? Why dost thou not groan within thy self, that this mortality might be swallowed up of life? Doth not the Scripture describe the Saints by their earnest looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus unto eternal life? *Jude* 21. *By their hastening unto the coming of the day of God*, 2 *Pet.* 3. 12. What is the matter that my heart hangs back? doth guilt lye upon my conscience? Or have I gotten into a pleasant condition in the world, which makes me say as *Peter* on the Mount, *It's good to be here*? Or want I the assurance of a better state? Must God make all my earthly comforts die, before I shall be willing to die? Awake Faith, awake my Love; beat up the drowzy desires of my soul, that I may say, make haste my Beloved, and come away.

The

The *Poem*.

NO prudent Husbandman expects
the fruit of what he sows,
Till every cause have its effects;
(1) John 4.35. and (1) then he reaps and mows.

(2) 1 Cor. 9.10 He works in (2) hope the year throughout,
and counts no labour lost;
If when the season comes about
(3) 1 Cor. 9.10 his harvest (3) quit his cost.

(4) Jam. 5.7. This rare (4) example justly may
rebuke, and put to shame;
My soul which sows its seed one day,
and looks to reap the same.

(5) Gal. 5.17. Is curs'd (5) nature now become
so kind a soyl to grace,
That to perfection it should come
within so short a space.

(6) 1 Pet. 4.18 Grace springs not up with speed and (6) ease
like Mushroms in a night,
(7) Rom 1.17 But rather by (7) degrees increase
(8) Prov. 4.18 as doth the (8) morning light.

Is corn so dear to Husbandmen?
Much more is (9) heaven to me,
(9) Psal. 4.6,7 Why should not I have patience then?
to wait as well as he.

(1) Act. 17.17. To promises (1) appointed years,
by God's decrees are set;
These once expir'd beyond its fears
my soul shall quickly get.

How

How (2) shall a part of hasty time
which (3) quickly will expire,
Doth me within this world confine,
and then comes my desire.

(2) Heb. 13.14.
(3) Heb. 10.17

Come Lord, (4) how long! my soul hath gasp'd,
faith my affections (5) warms;
O when shall my poor soul be clasp'd
in its Redeemers arms.

(4) Rev. 22.17.
(5) Heb. 11.13

The time seems (6) long, yet here I'le lye
Till thou my God do call,
It is enough, eternity
will make (7) amends for all.

(6) Rom. 8.23.
(7) Rom. 8.18

CHAP. XIX.

Corn fully ripe, is reap'd, and gather'd in.
So must your selves; when ripe in grace or sin.

Upon the harvest season.

OBSERVATION.

WHen the fields are white to harvest, then Husbandmen walk through them, rub the ears; and finding the grain full and solid, they presently prepare their Sithes and Sickles, send for their harvest men, who quickly reap and mow them down; and after these follow the binders, who stitch it up; from the field where it grew, it's carried to the Barn, where it is threshed out; the good grain gathered into an heap, the chaff separated and burnt, or thrown to the dunghil. How bare and naked do the fields look after harvest, which before were pleasant to behold? When the harvest men enter into the field, it is (to allude to that, Joel 2.3.)

before them, like the garden of *Eden*, and behind them a desolate wilderness; and in some places its usual to set fire to the dry stubble, when the corn is housed; which rages furiously, and covers it all with ashes.

APPLICATION.

THe Application of this, I find made to my hands, by Christ himself, in *Mat.* 13. 38, 39. *The field is the world, the good seed are the children of the kingdom, the tares are the children of the wicked one, the enemy that sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the world, the reapers are the Angels.*

The field is the world; there both the godly and ungodly live and grow together, till they be both ripe, and then they shall both be reaped down by death; death is the sickle that reaps down both. I will open this Allegory in the following particulars.

1. In a catching harvest, when the Husbandmen sees the clouds begin to gather and grow black, he hurries in his corn with all possible haste, and houses day and night.

So doth God the great Husbandman, he hurries the Saints into their graves, when judgments are coming upon the world, *Isa.* 57. 1. *The righteous perish, and no man layeth it to heart, and merciful men are taken away; none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come. Methusalah* died the year before the flood, *Augustine* a little before the sacking of *Hippo Regius* just before the taking of *Heidlebe ge*, *Luther* a little before the Wars brake out in *Germany*, but what speak I of single Saints? Sometimes the Lord houses great numbers together, before some sweeping judgment comes. How many bright and glorious stars did set almost together, within the compass of a few years to the astonishment of many wise and tender hearts in *England*. I find some of them thus ranked in a Funeral *Elegy*.

The learned *Twisse* went first, (it was his right)
Then holy *Palmer*, *Burroughes*, *Love*, *Gouge*, *White*,
Hill,

Hill, Whitaker, grave *Gataker*, and *Strong*,
Perne, Marshal, Robinson, all gone along.
I have not nam'd them half, their only strife,
Hath been (of late) who should first part with life.
These few who yet survive, sick of this age
Long to have done their parts and leave the stage.

The Lord sees it better for them to be under ground than above ground; and therefore by a merciful providence sets them out of harms way.

2. Neither the corn, or tares, can possibly resist the sharp and keen Sickle, when it's applyed to them by the reapers hand; neither can the godly or ungodly resist the stroke of death, when God inflicts it, *Eccles.* 8. 8. *No man can keep alive his own soul in the day of death, and there is no discharge in that war.* The frail body of man is as unable to withstand that stroke, as the weak reeds, or feeble stalks of the corn are to resist the keen Sithe and sharp Sickle.

3. The reapers receive the wheat which they cut down, into their arms and bosom. Hence that expression, by way of imprecation upon the wicked, *Psal.* 129. 7. *Let them be as the grass upon the house top, which withers before it grows up, wherewith the mower filleth not his hand, nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom.* Such withered grass are the wicked, who are never taken into the reapers bosom; but as soon as Saints are cut down by death, they fall into the hands and bosoms of the Angels of God, who bear them in their arms and bosoms to God their father, *Luke* 16. 22. For look, as these blessed spirits did exceedingly rejoyce at their conversion, *Luke* 15. 10. and thought it no dishonour to minister to them whilst they stood in the field, *Heb.* 1. 14. So when they are cut down by death, they will rejoyce to be their convoy to heaven.

4. When the corn and weeds are reap'd or mowed down, they shall never grow any more in that field; neither shall we ever return to live an animal life any more after death, *Job* 7. 9, 10. *As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away; so he that goeth down to the grave, shall come up no more; he shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more.*

5. Lastly, (to come home to the particular subject of this Chapter) the reapers are never sent to cut down the harvest, till it be fully ripe; neither will God reap down Saints or sinners, till they be come to a maturity of grace or wickedness. Saints are not reap'd down till their grace be ripe, *Job* 5.26. *Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, as a shock of corn cometh in in his season.* "Not that every godly man "dies in such a full old age (saith Mr. *Caryl* on the place) but "yet in one sense it is an universal truth, and ever fulfilled; "for whensoever they die, they die in a good age; yea, "though they die in the spring and flower of their youth, "they die in a good old age, (*i. e.*) they are ripe for death "when ever they die: When ever a godly man dies, it's "harvest time with him, though in a natural capacity he be "cut down while he is green, and cropt in the bud or blos-"som; yet in his spiritual capacity, he never dies before he "be ripe. God ripens his speedily, when he intends to take "them out of the world speedily; he can let out such warm "rayes and beams of his Spirit upon them, as shall soon "maturate the seeds of grace into a preparedness for "glory.

The wicked also have their ripening time for hell, and judgment; God doth with much long-suffering endure the vessels of wrath, prepared for destruction. Of their ripeness for judgment the Scripture often speaks, *Gen.*15. 16. *The sin of the* Amorites *is not yet full.* And of *Babylon* it's said, *Jer.*51.13. *O thou that dwellest upon many waters, thine end is come, and the measure of thy covetousness.*

'Tis worth remarking, that the measure of the sin, and the end of the sinner come together. So *Joel* 3.13. *Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest of the earth is ripe, for the press is full, the fats overflow, for their wickedness is great.* Where note, sinners are not cut down till they be ripe and ready. Indeed, they are never ripe for death, nor ready for the grave; that is, fit to die: yet they are alwayes ripe for wrath, and ready for hell before they die. Now as Husbandmen judge of the ripeness of their harvest, by the colour and hardness of the grain; so may we judge of the ripeness both of

Saints

Saints and sinners, for heaven or hell, by these following signs.

Three Signs of the maturity of Grace.

1. WHen the Corn is near ripe, it bowes the head, and stoops lower than when it was green. When the people of God are near ripe for heaven, they grow more humble and self-denying, than in the dayes of their first profession. The longer a Saint grows in this world, the better he is still acquainted with his own heart, and his obligations to God; both which are very humbling things. *Paul* had one foot in heaven, when he called himself the chiefest of sinners, and least of Saints, 1 *Tim.* 1.15. *Eph.* 3. 8. A Christian in the progress of his knowledge and grace, is like a vessel cast into the Sea, the more it fills, the deeper it sinks. Those that went to study at *Athens* (saith *Plutarch*) at first coming, seemed to themselves to be wise men; afterwards, only lovers of wisdom, and after that, only rhetoricians, such as could speak of wisdom, but knew little of it, and last of all Ideots in their own apprehensions; still with the increase of learning, laying aside their pride and arrogancy.

2. When harvest is nigh, the grain is more solid and pithy than ever it was before; green corn is soft and spungy, but ripe corn is substantial and weighty: So it is with Christians; the affections of a young Christian perhaps are more ferverous and sprightly, but those of a grown Christian are more judicious and solid; their love to Christ abounds more and more in all judgment, *Phil.* 1. 9. The limbs of a child are more active and plyable, but as he grows up to a perfect state, the parts are more consolidated and firmly knit. The fingers of an old Musician are not so nimble, but he hath a more judicious ear in musick, than in his youth.

3. When Corn is dead ripe, it's apt to fall of its own accord to the ground, and there shed; whereby it doth as it were anticipate the harvest man, and calls upon him to put in the sickle. Not unlike to which are the lookings and longings,

the groanings and haſtenings of ready Chriſtians, to their expected glory; they haſten to the coming of the Lord; or as *Montanus* more fitly renders it, They haſten the coming of the Lord; *(i.e.)* they are urgent and inſtant in their deſires, and cryes to haſten his coming; their deſires ſally forth to meet the Lord, they willingly take death by the hand; as the corn bends to the earth, ſo do theſe ſouls to heaven. This ſhews their harveſt to be near.

Six Signs of the maturity of Sin.

WHen ſinners are even dead ripe for hell, theſe ſigns appear upon them, or by theſe at leaſt, you may conclude thoſe ſouls not to be far from wrath, upon whom they appear.

1. When conſcience is waſted and grown paſt feeling, having no remorſe for ſin; when it ceaſes to check, reprove and ſmite for ſin any more, the day of that ſinner is at hand, his harveſt is even come. The greateſt violation of conſcience is the greateſt of ſins; this was the caſe of the forlorn *Gentiles*, among whom Satan had ſuch a plentiful harveſt; the patience of God ſuffered them to grow till their conſciences were grown ſeared and paſt feeling, *Eph.* 4. 19. When a member is ſo mortified, that if you lance and cut it never ſo much, no freſh blood, or quick fleſh appears, nor doth the man feel any pain in all this, then 'tis time to cut it off.

2. When men give themſelves over to the ſatisfaction of their luſts, to commit ſin with greedineſs, then are they grown to a maturity of ſin; when men have ſlipt the reins of conſcience, and ruſh headlong into all impiety, then the laſt ſands of Gods patience are running down. Thus *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, and the Cities about them, in like manner gave themſelves over to wickedneſs and ſtrange ſins; and then juſtice quickly truſt them up for an example, ſuffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

3. That man is even ripe for hell, that is become a contriver of

of sin, a designer, a student in wickedness; one would think it strange, that any man should set his invention on work, upon such a subject as sin is; that any should study to become a dexterous artist this way, and yet the Scripture frequently speaks of such, *whose bellies prepare deceit*, Job. 15. 35. *who travel in pain to bring forth*, this deformed birth, *ver.* 20. *who wink with their eyes*, whilst plodding wickedness, as men use to do when they are most intent upon the study of any knotty problem, *Prov.* 6. 13. These have so much of hell already in them, that they are more than half in hell already.

He that of a forward Professor, is turn'd a bitter persecutor, is also within a few rounds of the top of the ladder; the contempt of their light, the Lord hath already punished upon them, in their obduracy and madness against the light. Reader, if thou be gone thus far, thou art almost gone beyond all hope of recovery. Towards other sinners, God usually exercises more patience, but with such he makes short work. When *Judas* turns Traitor to his Lord, he is quickly sent to his own place. Such as are again intangled and overcome of those lusts they once seemed to have clean escaped, these bring upon themselves swift damnation, and their judgment lingers not, 2 *Pet.* 2. 3, 20. 4.

He that can endure no reproof or controul in the way of his sin, but derides all counsel, and like a strong current rages at, and sweeps away all obstacles in his way, will quickly fall into the dead lake, *Prov* 29. 1. *He that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.* This is a death spot, a hell spot, where ever it appears. From this very symptom the Prophet plainly predicted the approaching ruine of *Amaziah*, 2 *Chron.* 25. 16. *I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not hearkened to my voice.* He that will not be timely *counselled*, shall be quickly *destroyed.* 5.

Lastly, When a man comes to glory in his sin, and boast of his wickedness, then it's time to cut him down; *whose end is destruction, whose glory is in their shame*, Phil. 3. 19. This is a braving, a daring of God to his face, and with whom soever 6.

ſoever he bears long, to be ſure, theſe are none of them.

You ſee now, what are the ſigns of a full ripe ſinner; and when it comes to this, either with a Nation, or with a ſingle perſon, then ruin is near, *Joel* 3.13. *Gen.* 15.16. It is in the filling up of the meaſure of ſin, as in the filling of a veſſel caſt into the Sea, which rowls from ſide to ſide, taking in the water by little and little, till it be full, and then down it ſinks to the bottom. Mean while, admirable is divine patience, which bears with theſe veſſels of wrath, whilſt fitting for deſtruction.

REFLECTIONS.

I. The Reflection of a growing Chriſtian.

CHear thy ſelf, O my ſoul! with the heart ſtrengthening bread of this divine meditation. Let faith turn every drop of this truth into a ſoul-reviving cordial. God hath ſown the precious ſeed of grace upon my ſoul, and though my heart hath been an unkind ſoyl which hath kept it back, and much hindered its growth; yet bleſſed be the Lord, it ſtill grows on, though by ſlow degrees; and from the ſpringing of the ſeed, and ſhootings forth of thoſe gracious habits, I may conclude an approaching harveſt: Now is my ſalvation nearer than when I believed; every day I come nearer to my ſalvation, *Rom.* 13.11. O that every day I were more active for the God of my ſalvation! Grow on my ſoul, and add to thy faith vertue, to thy vertue knowledge, &c. Grow on from faith to faith; keep thy ſelf under the ripening influences of heavenly Ordinances; the faſter thou groweſt in grace, the ſooner thou ſhalt be reaped down in mercy, and bound up in the bundle of life, 1 *Sam.* 25.29. I have not yet attained the meaſure and proportion of grace aſſigned to me, neither am I already perfect, but am reaching forth to the things before me, and preſſing towards the mark for the prize of my heavenly calling, *Phil.* 3.12, 13. O mercy to be admired! that I who lately had one foot in hell, ſtand now with one foot in heaven!

But

But the case is far different with me, whilst others are ripening apace for heaven, I am withering; many a soul plowed up by conviction, and sown by sanctification long after me hath quite over-topt and out-grown me; my sweet and early blossoms are nipt and blown off, my bright morning overcast and clouded; had I kept on according to the rate of my first growth, I had either now been in heaven, or at least in the Suburbs of it on earth; but my graces wither and languish, my heart contracts and cools to heavenly things; the Sun and rain of Ordinances and providences improve not my graces; how sad therefore is the state of my soul?

2. The Reflection of a decaying Christian.

Thy case, O declining Saint, is sad! but not like mine; thine is but a temporary remission of the acts of grace, which is recoverable; but I am judicially hardening, and *treasuring up to myself wrath, against the day of wrath*, Rom. 2. 5. Time was, when I had some tender sense of sin, when I could mourn and grieve for it, now I have none at all. My heart is grown stupid and sottish. Time was when I had some conscientious care of duty, and my heart would smite me for the neglect of it; but now none at all. Wretched soul! what wilt thou do? thou art gone far indeed, a few steps farther will put thee beyond hope; hitherto I stand in the field, the long-suffering God doth yet spare me; yea, spare me, whiles he hath cut down many of my companions in sin round about me. What doth this admirable patience, this long-suffering drawn out to a wonder, speak concerning me? Doth it not tell me, that the Lord is not willing I should perish, but rather come to repentance? 2 *Pet.* 3. 9. And what argument is like his pity and patience, to lead a soul to repentance? *Rom.* 2. 4. Oh that I may not frustrate at last, the end of a long-suffering God! lest he proportion the degrees of his wrath, according to the length of his patience.

3. The Reflection of a hardning sinner.

The *Poem*.

WHen fields are (1) white to harveſt, forth you go
With Sith's and (2) Sickles; to reap down and mow.
Down go the laden ears, flat to the ground;
Which thoſe that follow, having ſticht and bound;
It's carted home unto the Barn, and ſo
The fields are rid; where lately corn did grow.
This world's the (3) field, and they that dwell therein;
The (4) Corn and (5) Tares; which long have ripening been.
Angels the (6) reapers, and the judgment day
The time of (7) harveſt when like Corn and hay;
The fading flower of (8) earthly glory muſt
Be mowed down, and level'd with the duſt.
The (9) Barns are heaven and hell; the time draws nigh
When through the darkned (1) clouds, and troubled skie
The Lord ſhall break, a dreadful (2) trumpet ſhall
Sound to the dead, the ſtars from heaven fall.
The rowling ſphears with (3) horrid flames ſhall burn,
And then the Tribes on earth ſhall (4) wail and mourn.
The judgment ſet, before Chriſts awful throne
All fleſh ſhall be (5) conven'd, and every one
Receive his doom: which done the juſt ſhall be
Bound in lites bundle; (6) even as you ſee
The full ripe ears of wheat bound up, and born
In ſheaves with joy; unto the Owners barn.
This done, the Angels next in 7 bundles binde
The tares together, as they did combinde
In acting ſin, ſo now their lot muſt be
To burn together in one miſery.
Drunkards with drunkards pinion'd, ſhall be ſent
To hell together in one 8 Regiment.
Adulterers and ſwearers there ſhall lye
In flames, among their old ſociety.
O dreadful (9) howlings! O the hideous moans
Of fetter'd ſinners! O the tears! the groans!

(1) John 4.35.
(2) Rev. 14.15
(3) Mat 13.38
(4) *ibid.*
(5) *ibid.*
(6) Mat. 13.39
(7) *ibid.*
(8) 2 Pet. 3.10.
(9) Mat. 13.30
(1) Rev. 1.7
(2) 1 Theſ. 4.16
(3) 2 Pet. 3.10.
(4) Mat. 24.30
(5) 2 Cor. 5.10.
(6) Mat. 13.30
(7) *ibid.*
(8) 1 Cor. 6.9.
(9) Mat. 13. 41, 42.

The

The doleful lamentations as they go
Chain'd fast together, to their place of wo.
The world thus clear'd, as fields when harvest's in,
Shall be no more a stage for acting sin.
With purifying (1) flames it shall be burn'd,
Its stately fabricks into ashes turn'd.
Cease then my soul, to dote on, or admire
This splendid world, which is reserv'd for fire.
Decline the company of sinners here,
As thou wouldst not be shackel'd with them there.

(1) 2 Pet. 3. 10.

CHAP. XVI.

Your Winter store in Summer you provide;
To Christian prudence this must be apply'd.

Upon the care of Husbandmen to provide for Winter.

OBSERVATION.

GOod husbands are careful in Summer to provide for Winter, then they gather in their Winter-store; food and fewel for themselves, and fodder for their cattel. *He that gathers in Summer is a wise son, but he that sleeps in harvest is a son that causes shame*, Prov. 10. 5. A well chosen season is the greatest advantage to any action, which as it is seldom found in haste, so it is often lost by delay. 'Tis a good Proverb which the frugal *Dutch* have among them; *Bonus Servatius, facit bonum Bonifacium*; a good Saver, will make a good Benefactor. And 'tis a good Proverb of our own; He that neglects the occasion, the occasion will neglect him. Husbandmen know that Summer will not last all the year, neither will they trust to the hopes of a mild and favourable Winter, but in season provide for the worst.

APPLICATION.

WHat excellent Chriſtians ſhould we be, were we but as provident and thoughtful for our ſouls? 'tis doubtleſs a ſingular point of Chriſtian wiſdom, to foreſee a day of ſpiritual ſtraits and neceſſities, and during the day of grace to make proviſion for it. This great Goſpel truth is excellently ſhadowed forth in this natural Obſervation, which I ſhall branch out into theſe ſeven particulars.

1. Husbandmen know there is a change, and viciſſitude of ſeaſons and weather; though it be pleaſant Summer weather now, yet Winter will tread upon the heel of Summer; froſts, ſnows, and great falls of rain muſt be expected. This alternate courſe of ſeaſons in nature is ſetled by a firm Law of the God of nature, to the end of the world, *Gen.* 8.22. *Whilſt the earth remaineth, ſeed time and harveſt, cold and heat, winter and ſummer, day and night, ſhall not ceaſe.*

And Chriſtians know, that there are changes in the right hand of the moſt High, in reference to their ſpiritual ſeaſons. If there be a *Spring time* of the Goſpel, there will alſo be an *Autumn*; if a day of *proſperity*, it will ſet in a night of *adverſity*; *for God hath ſet the one over againſt the other*, Eccleſ. 7.14. In heaven there is a day of everlaſting ſerenity, in hell a night of perfect and endleſs horror and darkneſs; on earth, light and darkneſs take their turns, proſperity and adverſity, even to ſouls as well as bodies, ſucceed each other. If there be a Goſpel-day, a day of grace now current, it will have its period and determination, *Gen.* 3.6.

2. Common prudence and experience inables the Husbandman, in the midſt of Summer, to foreſee a Winter, and provide for it before he feel it; yea, natural inſtinct teaches this to the very birds of the air, and beaſts of the field.

And ſpiritual wiſdom ſhould teach Chriſtians to exerciſe their foreſeeing faculties, and not ſuffer them to feel evil before they fear it. But, O the ſtupifying nature of ſin! Though the Stork in the heavens knows her appointed time, and the Turtle, Crane and Swallow the time of their coming,

ing, yet man, whom God hath made wiser than the fowls of the air, in this acts quite below them, *Jer.* 8. 7.

3. The end of God's ordaining a Summer season, and sending warm and pleasant weather, is to ripen the fruits of the earth, and give the Husbandman fit opportunity to gather them in.

And God's design in giving men a day of grace, is to furnish them with an opportuity for the everlasting happiness and salvation of their souls, *Rev.* 2. 21. *I gave her a space to repent.* It is not a meer reprieval of the soul, or only a delay of the execution of threatned wrath, though there be much mercy in that; but the peculiar aim of this patience and bounty of God, is to open for them a way to escape the wrath to come, *by leading them to repentance*, Rom. 2. 4.

4. The Husbandman doth not find all harvest seasons alike favourable, sometimes they have much fair weather, and meet with no hinderance in their business; other times 'tis a catching harvest, but now and then a fair day, and then they must be nimble, or all is lost.

There is also great difference in Soul-seasons, some have had a long and a fair season of grace; a hundred and twenty years did God wait upon the old world, in the Ministery of *Noah*. Long did God wait on the gainsaying *Israelites*, Isa. 42. 14. *I have a long time held my peace, I have been still and refrained my self.* Others have a short and catching season, all lies upon a day, upon a nick of time, *Act.* 17. 30.

5. A proper season neglected and lost, is irrecoverable. Many things in Husbandry must be done in their season, or cannot be done at all for that year; if he plow not, and sow not in the proper time, he loses the harvest of that year.

'Tis even so as to spiritual seasons. Christ neglected, and grace despised, in the season when God offers them, are irrecoverably lost, *Prov.* 1. 28. then (that is, when the season is over) they shall call upon me, but I will not hear. O, there is a great deal of time in a short opportunity! that may be done, or prevented, in an hour rightly timed, which cannot be done or prevented in a mans life time afterwards. There was one resolved to kill *Julius Cæsar* such a day; the night

before, a friend sent him a letter to acquaint him with it, but he being at supper, and busie in discourse, said, to morrow is a new day, and indeed it was, *dies novissima*, his last day to him; whence it became a Proverb in *Greece*, *To morrow is a new day.* Our glass runs in heaven, and we cannot see how much or little of the sand of God's patience is yet to run down; but this is certain, when that glass is run, there is nothing to be done for our souls, *Luke* 19. 42. *O that thou hadst known at least, in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes.*

6. Those Husbandmen that are careful and laborious in the Summer, have the comfort and benefit of it in Winter; he that then provides fewel, shall sit warm in his habitation, when others blow their fingers. He that provides food for his family, and fodder for his cattel in the harvest, shall eat the fruit of it, and enjoy the comfort of his labours, when others shall be exposed to shifts and straits. And he that provides for eternity, and layes up for his soul a good foundation against the time to come, shall eat when others are hungry, and sing when others howl, *Isa.* 65. 13. A day of death will come, and that will be a day of straits to all negligent souls; but then the diligent Christian shall enjoy the peace and comfort that shall flow in upon his heart, from his holy care and sincere diligence in duties; as 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. *This is our rejoycing, the testimony of our conscience, that in all sincerity and godly simplicity, we have had our conversation in this world.* So *Hezekiah*, 2 *King.* 20. 3. *Remember now, O Lord, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart.* A day of judgment will come, and then foolish virgins, who neglected the season of getting oyl in their lamps, will be put to their shifts; then they come to the wise, and say, give us of your oyl, *Mat.* 25. 8, 9. but they have none to spare, and the season of buying is then over.

7. No wise Husbandman will neglect a fit opportunity of gathering in his hay and corn, upon a presumption of much fair weather to come; he will not say, the weather is setled, and I need not trouble my self, though my corn and hay be fit for the house, yet I may get it in another time as well as now.

And

And no wise Christian will lose a present season for his soul, upon the hopes of much more time yet to come; but will rather say, now is my time, and I know not what will be hereafter; hereafter I may wish to see one of the dayes of the Son of man, and not see it, *Luke* 17. 22. 'Tis sad to hear how cunning some men are to dispute themselves out of heaven, as if the devil had hired them to plead against their own souls; sometimes urging the example of those that were called at the eleventh hour, *Mat.* 20. 6. and sometimes that of the penitent thief: But, O! to how little purpose is the former pleaded; they that were called at the eleventh hour, were never called before, as these have been, no man had hired; that is, called or invited them to Christ, and for the thief, (as Mr. *Fenner* rightly observes) it was a singular and extraordinary example. It was done when Christ hang'd on the cross, and was to be inaugurated; then Kings manifest such bounty, and pardon such crimes, as are never pardoned afterwards. Besides, God was then in a way of working miracles; then he rent the rocks, open'd the graves, raised the dead, and converted this thief; but God is now out of that way.

REFLECTIONS.

I. The careless soul's Reflection

I Have indeed been a good Husband for the world; with what care and providence have I looked out for my self and family, to provide food to nourish them, and cloaths to defend them against the asperities of Winter? mean while neglecting to make provision for eternity, or take care for my soul. O my destitute soul! how much have I slighted and undervalued thee? I have taken more care for an horse, or an ox, than for thee; a well-stored barn, but an empty soul. Will it not shortly be with me, as with that careless Mother, who when her house was on fire, busily bestir'd her self to save the goods, but forgot the child? though it were saved by another hand; and then minding her child, ran up and down like one distracted wringing her hands, and crying, O my child, my child! I have saved my goods, and lost my

my child. Such will be the case of thee, my soul, *Mat.* 16. 26. Besides how easie will my conviction be at the Bar of Christ? will not my providence and care for the things of this life, leave me speechless and self-condemned in that day? what shall I answer when the Lord shall say, Thou couldst foresee a Winter, and seasonably provide for it? yea, thou hadst so much care of thy very beasts, to provide for their necessities; and why tookest thou no care for thy soul? was that only not worth the caring for?

2. The presumptuous souls Reflection.

Is it so dangerous to neglect a present proper season of grace? what then have I done, who have suffered many such seasons to die away in my hand, upon a groundless hope of future opportunities? Ah, deluded wretch! what if that supposition fail? where am I then? I am not the Lord of time, neither am I sure, that he who is, will ever vouchsafe an hour of grace in old age, to him that hath neglected many such hours in youth; neither indeed is it ordinary for God so to do. 'Tis storied of *Caius Marius Victorius*, who lived about 300 years after Christ, and to his old age continued a *Pagan*, but at last being convinced of the Christian verity, he came to *Simplicianus* and told him, he would be a Christian; but neither he, nor the Church could believe it, it being so rare an example for any to be converted at his age: But at last, seeing it was real, there was a shouting and gladness, and singing of Psalms in all Churches, the people crying, *Caius Marius Victorius* is become a Christian. This was written for a wonder, and what ground have I to think, that God will work such wonders for me, who have neglected his ordinary means of salvation?

3. The industrious souls Reflection.

Bless the Lord, O my soul! who gave thee a season, a day for eternal life, which is more than he hath done for thousands; yea, bless the Lord for giving thee an heart to understand and improve that season, I confess I have not improved it as I ought; yet, this I can (through mercy) say, that how ever it fare in future times, with my outward man, though I have no treasures or stores laid up on earth; or if I have, they are but corruptible, yet I have a blessed hope laid up in heaven, *Col.* 1. 5. I have bags that wax not old. Whilst worldlings

worldlings rejoyce in their ſtores and heaps, I will rejoyce in theſe eternal treaſures.

The *Poem.*

OBſerve in Summers ſultry heat,
how in the (1) hotteſt day:
The Husbandman doth toyl and (2) ſweat:
about his Corn and Hay. (1) Job.7.2. (2) Gen.3.19.

If then he ſhould not reap and mow,
and (3) gather in his ſtore;
How ſhould he live, when for the ſnow
he can't move out of door? (3) Prov.10.5.

The little (4) Ants, and painful Bees;
by natures inſtinct led;
Theſe have their Summer granaries,
for Winter furniſhed. (4) Prov.6.6,7

But thou my ſoul, whoſe Summers day
is almoſt paſt and gone;
What ſoul-proviſion doſt thou (5) lay
in (6) ſtock, to ſpend upon? (5) Mat.6.19 (6) 1 Tim.6.19

If (7) nature teacheth to prepare
for temporal life, much rather
Grace ſhould provoke to (8) greater care,
ſoul-food in time to gather. (7) Jer.8.7. (8) Mat.16.25.

Dayes of affliction, and diſtreſs
are (9) haſting on a pace,
If now I live in careleſsneſs;
how ſad will be my caſe! (9) Zeph.1.2,3

(1) Isa. 32 9.

Unworthy of the name (1) of man,
who for that soul of thine;
Wilt not do that which others can
do for their very kine.

Think frugal Farmers, when you see
your mows of Corn and Hay;
(2) Luke 12. 18,20. What a (2) conviction this will be.
to you, another day.

Who ne're were up before the Sun,
nor brake an hours rest;
For your poor souls, as you have done
so often, for a beast.

(3) 2 Cor. 4 18
(4) 1 Cor. 7. 31.
(5) Prov. 23. 5.

Learn once to see the difference,
betwixt (3) eternal things;
And these poor (4) transient things of sence:
that fly with (5) eagles wings.

CHAP. XVII.

When from Tare seeds, you see choice Wheat to grow,
Then from your lusts, may joy and comfort flow.

Upon reaping the same we sow.

OBSERVATION.

GOd gives to every seed its own body, 1 *Cor.* 15. 38. At first he created every Tree and herb of the field, having its seed in it self, for the conservation of the *species*; & they all inviolably observe the Law of their Creation. All fruits naturally rise out of the seeds, and roots proper to them. *Men do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles.*

Such

Such productions would be monstruous in nature; and although the juyce or sap of the earth be the common matter of all kind of fruits, yet it is specificated according to the different sorts of Plants and seeds it nourishes. Where Wheat is sown, it's turned into Wheat; in an apple Tree, it becomes an apple; and so in every sort of Plants or seeds, it's concocted into fruit proper to the kind.

APPLICATION.

TRanslate this into spirituals, and the proposition shadowed forth by it, is fully expressed by the Apostle, *Gal.6.7 What a man sows, that shall he reap; they that sow to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; and they that sow to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting.* And as sure as the harvest follows the seed-time, so sure shall such fruits and effects result from the seeds of such actions. *He that soweth iniquity, shall reap vanity,* Prov. 22. 8. *And they that now go forth weeping, and bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again rejoycing bringing their sheaves with them,* Psal. 126.5. The sum of all is this, That our present actions have the same respect and relation to future rewards and punishments, as the seed we sow in our fields, hath to the harvest we reap from it. Every gracious action is the seed of joy, and every sinful action the seed of anguish and sorrow, to the soul that sowed it. Two things are sensibly presented to us in this similitude.

That as the seed sown, is presently covered from our sight under the clods, and for some time after we see no more of it, and yet at last it appears again, by which it's evident to us that it is not finally lost: So our present actions, though *physically* transient, and perhaps forgotten, yet are not lost, but after a time shall appear again in order to a retribution. 1.

If this were not so, all good and holy actions would be to the loss of him that performed them. All the self-denial, spending duties, and sharp sufferings of the people of God, would turn to their damage, though not in point of honesty,

yet in point of personal utility; and then also, what difference would there be betwixt the actions of a man and a beast, with respect to future good or evil? yea, man would then be more feared and obeyed than God, and souls be swayed in all their motions, only by the influence of present things; and where then would Religion be found in the world? 'Tis an excellent note of *Drexellius*; "Our works "(saith he) do not pass away as soon as they are done, but as "seed sown, shall after a time rise up to all eternity; what ever we think, speak or do, once spoken, thought or done, is eternal, and abides for ever.

Drexellius de æternitate propensa.

What *Zeuxes* the famous *Limner* said of his work, may be truly said of all our works; *Æternitati pingo*, I paint for eternity. O, how careful should men be of what they speak and do, whilst they are commanded so to speak, and so to do, as those that shall be judged by the perfect law of liberty, *Jam.* 2:12. What more transient than a vain word? and yet for such words, men shall give an account in the day of judgment, *Mat.* 12.36. That's the first thing; Actions like seed, shall rise and appear again in order to a retribution.

2. The other thing held forth in this similitude is, That according to the nature of our actions now, will be the fruit and reward of them then. Though the fruit or consequence of holy actions, for the present may seem bitter, and the fruit of sinful actions sweet and pleasant, yet there is nothing more certain, than that their future fruits shall be according to their present nature and quality, 2 *Cor.* 5. 10. Then *Dionisius* shall retract that saying, *Ecce quam prospera navigatio a Deo datur sacrilegis*; Behold how God favours our sacrileges. Sometimes indeed (though but rarely) God causes sinners to reap in this world, the same that they have sown; as hath been their sin, such hath been their punishment. It was openly confessed by *Adonibezek*, Judg. 1. 7. as I have done, so hath God requited me.

Socrates in his Church History furnishes us with a pertinent passage to this purpose, concerning *Valens* the *Emperor*, who was an *Arrian*, and a bitter persecutor of the Christians: This man, when eighty of the Orthodox Christians sailed from

from *Constantinople* to *Nicomedia*, to treat with him about the points of *Arrianism*, and to settle the matter by way of dispute; the *Emperor* hearing of their arrival, while they were yet in the Harbour, and not a man landed, caused the Ships to be fired wherein they were, and so consumed them all. Not long after, in his Wars against the *Goths*, he was overthrown; and hiding himself in a little Cottage, the enemy coming by, burnt it and him together. Thus this wretch reap'd what he sowed, burning for burning, the very same in kind paid him again; it is not alwayes so in this world, but so it shall be in that to come; the Table shall then be turned, and the *Scene* altered; for shall not the Judge of all the world do righteously? *Diogenes* was tempted to think, that God had cast off the government of the world, when he saw the wicked prosper in their wickedness. On the same ground, many have been tempted to *Atheism*; but then the world shall see distributive justice shining out in its glory. *Tribulation, anguish and wrath, to every soul of man that doth evil; but glory honour and peace, to every man that worketh good*, Rom. 2. 9, 10. Then 'twill appear what seed we sowed, what lives we lived; for God shall bring every work into judgement, with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil, *Eccles.* 12. 14.

Cum vidto mala fata bonis, ignoscite quesso: sollicitor nullos esse putare Deos. Ovid.

REFLECTIONS.

THis Meditation may be to me what the hand-writing upon the wall was to that profane Prince, *Dan.* 5. 5, 6. and a like effect it should have upon me; for if all the actions of this life be seed sown for the next, Lord, what a crop, what a dreadful harvest am I like to have? how many oaths and curses, lyes & vain words, have I sown with my tongue, how have I wronged, oppressed, and over-reached in my dealings? rushed into all profaneness, drunkemess, uncleanness, Sabbath breaking, &c. *as the horse rusheth into the battel*; and what shall I reap from such seed as this, but vengeance and fury? These sins seemed pleasant in the commission, but O, how bitter will they be in their account? *What*

1. The proper persons Reflection.

shall

ſhall I do when God riſeth up? and when he viſiteth, what ſhall I anſwer him? Job 31. 14. Is it not reaſonable and juſt, (O my ſoul) that thou ſhouldeſt eat the fruit of thine own planting, and reap what thou haſt ſown? I thought nothing but profit and pleaſure would ſpring from my luſts, but now I ſee 'tis a root bearing gall and wormwood, *Deut.* 29. 18. Wretched ſoul, what ſhall I do? if theſe actions be not, then am I undone. I have been the author of mine own ruin, 'twiſted an halter with mine own fingers, for the execution of mine own ſoul! O, let me rather taſte the bitterneſs of ſin, by repentance now, than injoy its preſent pleaſures, which betray the ſoul to endleſs wrath!

2. The moral mans Reflection.

How have I alſo been deceived in this matter? I verily thought that glory and immortality would have been the fruit and product of my moral honeſty and righteouſneſs, that joy and peace had been ſeminally contained in thoſe actions; but now I ſee ſuch fruit can ſpring from no other root but ſpecial grace. Glory is diſcloſed from no other bud but holineſs. Alas! all my planting and ſowing was to little purpoſe, becauſe I ſowed not the right kind of ſeed; the beſt fruit I can expect from this, is but a leſſer degree of damnation.

Deluded ſoul, thy ſeed is no better than what the *moral Heathens* ſowed; and do I expect better fruit than what they reaped? Civility without Chriſt, is but a freer ſlavery; and Satan holds me as faſt in captivity by this, as he doth the prophane by the pleaſure of their luſts; either I muſt ſow better ſeed, or look to reap bitter fruit.

3. The holy ſouls Reflection.

Mean while, bleſs the Lord (O my ſoul) who inabled thee to ſow better ſeed! who kept thee watching, humbling thy ſelf, and praying, whilſt others have been ſwearing, drinking and blaſpheming. This will yield thee the fruit of joy in the world to come; yea, it already yields preſent peace to thy conſcience. Theſe revenues are better than gold, ſweeter than the honey, and the honey comb; not that ſuch fruits are meritoriouſly contained in theſe actions, I ſow to my ſelf in righteouſneſs, but I reap in mercy, *Hoſ.* 10. 12. This is the way in which God will ſave and glorifie me. O then, let me be

be ever abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that my labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.

The *Poem.*

'TWould be a strange and monstrous thing to see
Cherries, or Plums grow on an apple Tree.
Who ever gather'd from the (1) thistle Figs?
Or fruitful Grapes from off the worthless twigs
Of pricking thorns? in nature still we find
All its productions (2) answering to their kind.
As are the Plants we set, or seeds we sow;
Such is the (3) fruit we shake, and corn we mow:
And canst thou think that from corruptions root,
Thy soul shall pluck the sweet and pleasant fruit
Of spiritual peace? who ever that was wise,
Abus'd himself with such (4) absurdities?
Look what you sow, the very same you'l reap.
The fruit of what you plant, be sure you'l eat.
How are they (5) baffled by a subtil devil?
That hope for heaven, whilst their wayes are evil.
Such reasonings here their credulous souls beguil,
At which in other things, themselves would smile.
Our present acts though slightly passed by,
Are so much (6) seed, sown for eternity.
The seeds of prayers, secret groans and tears;
Will shoot at last into the full blown ears,
Of peace and joy. (7) Blessed are they that sow
Beside these waters, yea, thrice blest that go
Bearing such precious seed; though now they mourn,
With joyful sheaves, they shortly shall return.
Needs must the full ripe fruits in heaven be good,
When as the seed was glory in the bud.
But O, the (8) bitter, baneful fruits of sin!
When all the (9) pleasure sinners have therein

(1) Mat 7.16.
(2) Gen.1.12.
(3) Job.4.7.
(4) Jam.1.22.
(5) Gal.6.7.
(6) Gal. 6.7.
(7) Psal.126.5
(8) Deut.29.18
(9) Heb.11.25

Like

Like faded blossoms to the ground shall fall,
Then they will taste the wormwood and the gall.
What God and conscience now of sin report,
(1) Prov. 14. 9. You slight, and with their dreadful threatnings (1) sport.
But he'l convince you then, your wayes were naught,
(2) Judg. 8. 7: As *Gideon* the men of (2) *Succoth* taught.
If Sermons cannot, fire and brimstone must
Teach men how good it is to pamper lust.
(3) Mark. 9. 44 When conscience (3) takes thee by the throat and cryes.
Now wretch, now sinner, thou that didst despise
My warnings, learn, and ever learning be
That Lesson, which thou ne're wouldst learn of me.
The stoutest sinner then will howl and roar,
O sin! I never saw thy face before.
Is this the fruit of sin? is this the place
Where I must lye? is this indeed the case
Of my poor soul! must I be bound in chains
With these companions? Oh, is this the gains
I get by sin! poor wretch, I that would never
See this before, am now undone for ever.

CHAP. XVIII.

Upon the joy of Harvest men

Great is the joy of Harvest men, yet less
Than theirs, whom God doth with his favour bless.

OBSERVATION.

AMong all earthly joyes, these four sorts are noted in Scripture, as the most excellent and remarkable; (1) *Nuptial joyes*, the day of Espousals is the day of the gladness of a mans heart, *Cant.* 3. 11. (2) *The joy of children.* Though now it seem but a common mercy to most, and a burden

den to some; yet the people of God were wont to esteem it a choice mercy, and rejoyced greatly in it, *Joh.* 16. 21. there's joy that a man is born into the world. (3) *The joy of conquests* and victories, when men divide the spoyl. And lastly, *The joy of Harvest*; these two we find put together as principal matters of joy, *Isa.* 9.3. *They joy before thee, according to the joy in Harvest, and as men rejoyce when they divide the spoyl.* The joy of Harvest, is no small joy; *Gaudium messis, est messis gaudii*; the joy of harvest, is the harvest of their joy. 'Tis usual with men, when they have reaped down their harvest, (or cut the neck, as they call it) to demonstrate their joy by shoutings, and loud acclamations.

APPLICATION.

THus, and unspeakably more than thus, do Saints rejoyce and shout for joy, when they reap the favour and love of God, for which they laboured in many a weary duty. This joy of harvest, as great as it is, and as much as carnal hearts are lifted up with it, is but a trifle, a thing of nought, compared with yours; after they have sown to themselves in righteousness, and waited for the effects and returns of their duties with patience, and at last come to reap in mercy, either the full harvest in heaven, or but the first fruits of it on earth, yet rejoyce, *with joy unspeakable and full of glory*, 1 *Pet.* 1.8. *This puts more gladness into their hearts, than when corn and wine increases*, Psal. 4.7. Carnal joyes are but soul-Fevers, the Agues of the inner man; there is a great difference betwixt the unnatural inflamations of a feverish body which wastes the spirits, and drinks up the radical moisture, and that kindly well-temper'd heat of an healthy body; and as much between the sweet, serene and heavenly joyes, which flow from the bosom of *Christ* into the hearts of believers, and those earthly delights which carnal hearts in a sensual way suck out of creature-enjoyments. I will shew you the transcendency of spiritual joyes, above the joy of harvest, in these eight particulars following.

You that joy with the joy of harvest, are glad, because 1.

now you have food for your selves and families to live upon all the year; but the Christian rejoyceth, because he hath bread to eat, that the world knows not of, *Rev.*2.17. Christ is the food of his soul, and his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed, *John* 5.55. (*i. e.*) the most real and excellent food. You read, *Psal.*78.25. that man did eat Angels food (*i. e.*) Manna, which was such excellent bread, that if Angels did live upon material food, this would be chosen for them; and yet this is but a type and dark shadow of *Jesus Christ*, the food of believers.

2. You rejoyce when your harvest is in, because corn is virtually many other things besides food; you can turn it into cloaths to keep you warm, and many other necessaries may be purchased by it: but yet it is not like Christ, the object of a Saints joy; though it answers many things, it doth not answer all things as Christ doth; turn it into what you will, it hath but a limited and respective usefulness: but Jesus Christ is all in all to believers, and of him their faith can fetch all supplies; he is their health in sickness, their strength in weakness, their ease in pain, their honour in reproach, their wealth in poverty, their friend in friendlessness, their habitation when harbourless, their enlargement in bonds, the strength of their hearts, and life of their life. O he is a full Christ, and what ever excellencies are scattered among all the creatures, do meet all in him, and much more.

3. You rejoyce when you have gotten in your harvest, because now you can free those engagements, and pay those debts which you have contracted. 'Tis a comfort to be out of debt, and you may lawfully rejoyce that God gives you wherewith to quit your engagements, that you may owe no man any thing but love: but still the joy of harvest falls short of the joy of Saints; for you rejoyce that you are, or have wherewith to help your selves out of mens debts: but they rejoyce that they are out of God's debt; that his book is cancelled, and their sins pardoned; that by reason of the imputed righteousness of Christ, the Law can demand nothing from them, *Rom.* 8. 1. O what matter of joy is this!

You

You rejoyce, because now your corn is out of danger, all the while it was abroad it was in hazard, but now it's housed you fear not the rain. But Christians rejoyce, not because their corn is safe, but because their souls are so. All the while they abode in an unregenerate state, they were every moment in danger of the storms of wrath; but now being in Christ, that danger is over; and what compare is there betwixt the safety of a little corn, and the security of an immortal soul? 4.

Your joy is but in a gift of common providence. *Turks* and *Heathens* can rejoyce with your joy, but the joy of a Christian is a peculiar favour and gift of God. Corn is given to all Nations, even the most barbarous and wicked have store of it; but Christ is the portion but of a few, and those the dearly beloved of God. *Luther* said of the whole *Turkish Empire* (where is the best and greatest store of corn), that it is but a crumb which the Master of the Family throws to the dogs. He that had more corn than his Barns could hold, now wants a drop of water to cool his tongue. Christ is a gift bestowed only upon God's Elect. 5.

Your joy will have an end; the time is coming, that when you have reaped down your harvests, your selves must be reaped down by death, and then you shall rejoyce in these things no more; but when your joy is ended, then is the joy of Saints perfected; they reap their harvest, when you leave your harvest: their consolation is everlasting. 6.

God can separate your joy from these enjoyments, even while you have them, as well as when you leave them. 'Tis one thing for a man to have riches and full Barns, and another thing to have comfort in them, *Eccles.* 5. 19, 20. But now the joy of Christians is a thing inseparable from their enjoyment of Christ: Indeed the sense of their interest may be lost, and so the acts of their joy intermitted; but they alwayes have it in the seed, if not in the fruit, *Psal.* 97. 11. *Joy is sown for the upright*; he hath it still in the principle, and in the promise. 7.

The joy of Harvest men, for the most part, is only in their harvest, and in such earthly things; take that away, and their 8.

joy ceaſes. Earthly hearts are acquainted with no higher comforts; but the people of God can joy in him, and take comfort in their earthly injoyments too; and what comfort they take in theſe things, is much more refined and ſweet than yours; for they enjoy all theſe things in God, and his love in giving them, puts a ſweetneſs into them, that you are unacquainted with. Thus you ſee, how far your joy falls ſhort of theirs.

REFLECTIONS.

1. A Reflection for one that hath a full Barn, but no Chriſt.

HOw have I rejoyced in a thing of nought, and pleaſed my ſelf with a vanity? God hath bleſſed me in my fields, and in my ſtores; but not with ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly places in Chriſt. My Barns are full of corn, but my ſoul is empty of grace; common bounty hath given me a fulneſs of the things of this life, but what if the meaning of it ſhould be to fat me for the day of ſlaughter? what if this be the whole of my portion from the Lord? what if the language of his providences to my ſoul ſhould be this? Lo, here I have given thee (with *Iſhmael*) the fatneſs of the earth: Thou ſhalt not ſay, but thou haſt taſted of thy Creator's bounty; but make the moſt of it, for this is all that ever thou ſhalt have from me: There be others in the world, to whom I have denyed theſe things, but for them I have reſerved better; for the moſt part they are poor in this world, but rich in faith, and heirs of the Kingdom? Is not this enough to damp all my carnal mirth? Should my conſcience give me ſuch a *memento*, as *Abraham* in the parable gave to *Dives*; *Remember that thou in thy life time receiveſt thy good things*, Ah, what a cut would that be to all my comforts? A man in a Fever hath a lively colour, but a dying heart. I have an appearance, a ſhadow of comfort, but a ſad ſtate of ſoul.

2. A Reflection for one that hath Chriſt, but no Barn.

Bleſſed be the God and father of my Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath bleſſed me with all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly places in Chriſt, *Eph.* 1. 3. Though he hath not ſeen fit to give me much of this world in hand, yet it hath pleaſed him to ſettle a rich inhe-

inheritance upon me by promise; the hopes and expectations whereof, yield my soul more true comfort than all the present enjoyments of this world could have done. Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given me my portion in this life, that by keeping me from the *enjoyment*, hath also preserved me from the *snares* of a prosperous estate.

Lord Jesus, I have no bags, I have no Barns; but thou shalt be to me instead of all those things. When others rejoyce in the fulness of their earthly comforts, I will rejoyce in the fulness of my Christ; they have that which (though I have not) I shall not want; and I have that which all their riches cannot purchase. Bless the Lord, O my soul!

3. A Reflection for one that hath a full Barn and Christ too.

But Lord, how am I obliged, above thousands, to love and praise thee! to bless and admire thee, who hast not only plentifully provided for my soul, but for my body too! who hast given me both the upper and the neather springs, heaven and earth, things present, and things to come: Thou hast not dealt so with all, no, not with all of thine own people; many of them are strangers to the mercies which I enjoy. God hath done great things for me; O my soul! what wilt thou do for God? The freer the condition is, he hath placed me in, the more am I both obliged and advantaged for his service; and yet I doubt it will be found, that many a poor Christian that labours with his hands to get his bread, redeems more hours for God than I do. Lord, make me wise to understand, and answer the double end of this gracious dispensation! Let me bestow the more of my time on God, and stand ready to Minister to the necessities of his people.

4. A Reflection for one that hath neither a Barn, nor a Christ.

Oh, what an unhappy wretch am I! that have nothing either in hand, or in hope; am miserable here, and like to be so for ever: Had I but an interest in Christ, as the godly poor have, that would sweeten all present troubles, and shew me the end of them. But alas! I am poor and wicked, contemned of men, and abhorred of God; an object of contempt, both to heaven and earth. Lord, look upon such a truly miserable object with compassion, give me a portion with thy people in the world to come, if thou never better

my

my outward condition here! O ſanctifie this poverty! bleſs theſe ſtraits and wants, that they may neceſſitate my ſoul to go to Chriſt; make this poverty the way to glory, and I ſhall bleſs thee to eternity, that I was poor in this world.

The *Poem*.

OFt have I ſeen when harveſt's almoſt in,
The laſt load coming; how ſome men have bin
Rapt up with joy, as if that welcome cart
Drew home the very (1) treaſure of their heart.
What joyful ſhoutings! hooping! hollowing noiſe,
With mingled voices both of men and boyes?
To carnal minds there is no (2) greater mirth,
No higher joy; nor greater heaven on earth.
He ſpeaks pure Paradoxes, that ſhall ſay
Theſe are but trifles; to what Saints enjoy.
But they (3) deſpiſe your ſparks, as much as you
Contemn their Sun. Some that could never ſhew
A full ſtuft (4) Barn, on which you ſet your heart;
But glean perhaps the ears behind your cart:
Yet are the gleanings of their comfort more,
Than all your harveſt, and admired ſtore.
Your mirth is (5) mixt with ſorrow, theirs is pure
Yours like a ſhadow (6) fleets, but theirs endure.
God gives to you the huſk, to them the pith;
And no heart-ſtinging ſorrow (7) adds therewith.
Though at the gates of death they ſometimes mourn,
No ſooner doth the Lord to them return;
But ſorrow's baniſht from their penſive breaſt;
Joy triumphs there, and (8) ſmiles their cheeks inveſt.
Have you beheld when with perfumed wings,
Out of the balmy Eaſt bright *Phœbus* ſprings;
Mounting th' *Olympick* hill, with what a grace
He views the throne of darkneſs; and doth chaſe

(1) Iſa. 9. 3.
(2) Pſal. 4. 7.
(3) Prov. 19. 27
(4) Luke 16. 20, 21.
(5) Job. 20. 23.
(6) Job 20. 5.
(7) Prov. 10. 22.
(8) Pſal. 42. 11.

The

The shades of night before him? having hurl'd
His golden beams about this lower world,
How from sad Groves, and solitary Cells
Where horrid darkness: and confusion dwells,
Bats, Owles, and doleful creatures fly away,
Resigning to the cheerful birds of day,
Who in those places now can sit and chant,
Where lately such sad creatures kept their haunt.
Thus grief resigns to joy, sighs, groans and tears,
To songs triumphant when the Lord appears.
O matchless joy! O countenance divine!
What are those trifles, to these smiles of thine!
May I with poor *Mephibosheth* be blest
With these sweet smiles, let *Ziba* take the rest.
My life, my treasure, thou shalt ne'r be sold
For silver hills, or rivers pav'd with gold.
Wer't thou but known to worldlings, they would scorn,
To stoop their hearts to such poor things as corn.
For so they do, because thou art above
That sphere wherein their low conceptions move.

CHAP. XIX.

More solid grain with greater strength you thrash,
The ablest Christians have the hardest lash.

Upon the thrashing out of Corn.

OBSERVATION.

HUsbandmen having to do with divers sorts of grain, some more tough and stubborn; others more free and tender, do not beat all alike in the threshing floor; but as they have threshals of several sizes, so they bestow on some grain more, on other fewer strokes, according to the different qualities of the grain to be threshed. This observation the

the Prophet *Isaiah* hath, *Chap.*28. v.27. *The Fitches are not threshed with a threshing instrument, neither is the Cart-wheel turn'd about upon the Cummin, but the Fitches are beaten out with a staff, and the Cummin with a rod.* The manner of beating out the corn in ancient times, was far different from that which is now in use among us; they had the Cart-wheel, which was full of iron spokes or teeth, and the hoofs of beasts for the harder sort of grain, as Wheat, Rye and Barley, a staff or flail for the Fitches, and a rod or twig for the Cummin; all which instruments were proportioned according to the nature of the grain.

APPLICATION.

GOd having to do in a way of correction with divers sorts of offenders, doth not use the like severity with them all, but proportions his correction to their abilities and strength, *Jer.* 30. 11. I will not make a full end of thee, but will [correct thee in measure] and will not leave thee altogether unpunished, *(q.d.)* afflicted thou must be, my respect to my own glory and thy good, puts a necessity upon that; but yet I will do it moderately, I will not lay on without measure or mercy, as I intend to do upon the enemies; but will mete out your sufferings in a due proportion, even as a careful Physician in prescribing pills or potions to his Patients, hath regard as well to the ability of the Patient as to the nature and quality of the disease; even so thy God, O *Israel*, will not afflict thee according to the greatness of his power and his wrath; answerable thereunto, *Psal.* 90. 11. that would break thee to pieces, *Psal.* 78. 38. Nor yet will he afflict thee according to the demerit of thy sin. As it shall be much less than what I could inflict; so it shall be less than thine iniquities deserve, *Ezra* 9. 13. Neither my power, nor thy desert, shall be the rule of my proceedings; but I will do it with moderation and mercy, as thou art able to bear. I that have instructed the Husbandman to proportion his instruments to the quality of the grain before him, will exercise the like wisdom and mildness towards thee.

thee, and the similitude betwixt the Husbandmans threshing his corn, and the Lords afflicting his people, stands in these particulars.

The Husbandmans end in threshing the corn, is to separate it from the husks and chaff; and God's end in afflicting his people, is to separate them from their sins, *Isa.* 27. 9. In measure when it shooteth forth, he will debate with it, (*i.e.*) he will moderately correct them; and what the end of those corrections are, the next words inform us; *By this therefore shall the iniquity of* Jacob *be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his sin.* God uses afflictions, as we use sope, to cleanse away filthiness, and fetch out spots, *Dan.* 11. 35. he aims not at the destruction of their persons, but of their lusts. 1.

If the Husbandman have cockle, darnel, or pernicious tares before him in the floor among his corn, he little regards whether it be bruised and battered to pieces by the threshold or no; 'tis a worthless thing, and he spares it not. Such cockle and tares are the enemies of God; and when these come under his flail, he strikes them without mercy; for these, the Lord prepares a new sharp threshing instrument, having teeth, which shall beat them to dust, *Isa.* 41. 15. *The daughter of* Babylon *is like a threshing floor, 'tis time to thresh her,* Jer. 51. 33. And when that time is come, then (in allusion to the beast, that was to tread out the corn) *Sion's horn shall be of iron, and her hoofs brass,* Mich. 4. 13. He smites not his people, according to the stroke of them that smote them; the meaning is, his strokes on them shall be deadly strokes. They shewed no mercy to *Sion,* and God will shew no mercy to them. 2.

When the husks and chaff are perfectly separated from the grain, then the Husbandman beats it no more. When God hath perfectly purged and separated the sins of his people, then afflictions shall come to a perpetual end, he will never smite them again; there is no noise of the threshing instrument in heaven; he that beat them with his flaile on earth, will put them into his bosom in heaven. 3.

Though the Husbandman layes on, and beats his corn, as 4.

if he were angry with it, yet he loves and highly prizes it; and though God ſtrike and afflict his people, yet he ſets a great value upon them; and it is equally abſurd to infer God's hatred to his people from his afflicting of them, as the Husbandmans hatred of his corn, becauſe he threſhes and beats it, *Heb.* 12. 6. *Whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, and chaſteneth every ſon whom he receiveth.*

5. Though the Husbandman threſh and beat the corn, yet he will not bruiſe or hurt it, if he can help it; though ſome require more and harder ſtrokes than others, yet none ſhall have more than it can endure. And though the Lord afflict his ſervants, yet he will do them no hurt, *Jer.* 25. 6. Some need more rods than others, but none ſhall have more than they can bear; the Lord knows the meaſures and degrees of his ſervants faith and patience, and accordingly ſhall their tryals be, *Pſal.* 103: 13, 14. *Like as a father pities his children, ſo the Lord pitieth them that fear him; for he knows their frame, he remembers they are but duſt; he makes a way to eſcape, that they may be able to bear it,* 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. This care and tenderneſs of God over his afflicted, is eminently diſcovered in three particulars.

(1) In not expoſing them to, till he have prepared them for their tryals, *Luke* 24. 49. *Tarry ye at* Jeruſalem, *until ye be endued with power from on high.* He gives them ſometimes eminent diſcoveries of his love immediately before, and as a preparative to their ſufferings; in the ſtrength whereof, they are carried through all.

(2) Or if not ſo, then he intermixeth ſupporting comfort with their troubles, as you ſometimes ſee the Sun ſhine out, while the rain falls. 'Twas ſo with *Paul, Acts* 27. 23. *This night* (and it was a ſad night indeed) *there ſtood by me the Angel of the Lord, whoſe I am.*

3. In taking off the Affliction, when they can bear it no longer, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. *He makes a way to eſcape, that they may be able to bear it.* Pſal. 125. 3. The rod is taken off, *when the righteous is even ready to put forth his hand to iniquity.* 'Tis a Jewiſh Proverb, When the bricks are doubled, then comes *Moſes*. And it is a Chriſtian experience, When the ſpirit is ready

ready to fail, then comes Jesus; according to that promise, *Isa.* 57. 16.

REFLECTIONS.

HOw unlike am I to God, in the afflicting of his people? The Lord is pitiful when he smites them, but I have been cruel. He is kind to them, when most severe; but the best of my kindnesses to them, may fitly enough be called severity. God smites them in love, I have smitten them in hatred. Ah, what have I done? God hath used me as his hand, *Psal.* 17. 14. or as his rod to afflict them, *Jer.* 10. 7. but his end and mine have widely differed in that action, *Isa.* 10. 7. I am but the Scullion, or rather the Wisp to scour and cleanse these vessels of glory, and when I have done that dirty work, those bright souls shall be set up in heaven, and I cast into the fire. If he shall have judgment without mercy, that shewed no mercy; how can I expect mercy from the Lord, whose people I have persecuted mercilesly for his sake?

1. A Reflection for persecutors.

Is the Lord's Wheat thus threshed in the floor of affliction? What then shall I think of my condition, who prosper and am let alone in the way of sin? Surely the Lord looks on me as on a weed, and not as his corn; and 'tis too probable, that I am rather reserved for burning, than threshing. Some there are whom God loves not so well as to spend a rod upon them, but saith, *Let them alone*, Hos. 4. 17. but miserable is their condition, notwithstanding their impunity; for what is the interpretation but this? I will come to a reckoning with them for altogether in hell. Lord, how much better is thy afflicting mercy, than thy sparing severity! Better is the condition of an afflicted child, than of a rejected bastard. *Heb.* 12. 7. O, let me rather feel thy rod now, as the rod of a loving father, than feel thy wrath hereafter, as the wrath of an omnipotent avenger.

2. A Reflection for such as meet with no afflictions.

Well then, despond not, O my soul! thou heareſt the Husbandman loves his corn though he thresheth it: and surely the Lord loves thee not the less, because he afflicts thee so much.

3. A Reflection for an afflicted Saint.

much. If affliction then be the way to heaven, bleſſed be God for affliction. The threſhing ſtrokes of God have come thick upon me, by which I may ſee, what a tough and ſtubborn heart I have; if one ſtroke would have done the work, he would not have lifted up his hand the ſecond time. I have not had a ſtroke more than I had need of, 1 *Pet.* 1. 6. and by this means he will purge my ſin, bleſſed be God for that. The damned have infinitely more and harder ſtrokes than I, and yet their ſin ſhall never be ſeparated by their ſufferings. Ah, ſin, curſed ſin, I am ſo much out of love with thee, that I am willing to endure more than all this to be well rid of thee; all this I ſuffer for thy ſake, but the time is coming when I ſhall be rid of ſin and ſuffering together. Mean while, I am under my own fathers hand, ſmite me he may, but hate me he cannot.

The *Poem*.

THe ſacred Records tell us, heretofore
God had an Altar in a (1) threſhing floor;
(1) 2 Sam. 24. 21. Where threſhing inſtruments devoted were
To ſacred ſervice, ſo you find them here.
I now would teach the threſher to beat forth,
A notion from his threſhold much more worth
Than all his corn; and make him underſtand
That ſoul-inſtructing engine in his hand.
(2) Iſa. 28. 27. With fewer (2) ſtrokes, and lighter you will beat
The Oats and Barley; than the ſtubborn Wheat,
Which will require and endure more blows,
Than freer grain. Thus deals (3) the Lord by thoſe
(3) Iſa. 27. 7, 8. Whom he afflicts. He doth not uſe to ſtrike
Offending children, with his rod alike.
(4) Joh. 1. 1, 12 But on the (4) ableſt ſhoulders doth impoſe,
(5) Jer. 30. 11. The heavieſt burdens; and the (5) leſs on thoſe

Of

Or weaker grace. He shews himself a God
Of judgement, in his handling of the rod.
God hath a (6) rate-book by him, wherein he
Keeps just accounts, how rich his people be:
What faith, experience, patience more or less
Each one possesseth, and doth them assess
According to their stock. Such as have not
A Martyrs *faith*, shall have no Martyrs *lot*.
The (7) kinds, degrees, and the continuance
Of all their sufferings, to a circumstance;
Prescribed are by him who wisely swayes
The world, and (8) more than's right on no man layes.
Be man or devil the Apothecary,
God's the Physician; who can then miscarry
In such a hand? he never did, or will
Suffer the least addition to his bill.
Nor measure, nor yet mercy he observes
In threshing (1) *Babylon*, for she deserves
His heaviest strokes; and in his floor she must
Be beaten shortly with his flail to dust.
But *Sion's* God in (9) measure will debate,
His children he may smite; but cannot hate.
He beats them, true, to make their chaff to flye;
That they like purged golden grains may lye
In one fair heap, with those bless'd souls that here
Once in like manner thrash'd, and winnowed were.

(6) Rev. 3. 8.

(7) Rev. 2. 10.

(8) Job 34. 23.

(9) Isa. 41. 15.

(1) Isa. 27. 7.

CHAP. XX.

The Fan doth cause light chaff to fly away,
So shall th' ungodly, in God's winnowing day.

Upon the winnowing of corn.

OBSERVATION.

WHen the corn is threshed out in the floor, where it lyes mingled with empty ears, and worthless

worthless chaff, the husbandman carries it out altogether into some open place, where having spread his sheet for the preservation of the grain, he exposes it all to the wind; the good grain, by reason of its solidity, remains upon the sheet, but the chaff being light and empty, is partly carried quite away by the wind, and all the rest separated from the good grain into a distinct heap, which is carried away, either to the fire or the dunghil, as a worthless thing.

APPLICATION.

MEn have their winnowing dayes, and God hath his; a day to separate the chaff from the wheat, the godly from the ungodly, who shall both be held up to the wind, but only the wicked shall be driven away by it. Such a day God hath in this world, wherein he winnows his wheat, and separates the chaff. There is a double fanning or winnowing of men here in this world; one is *doctrinally*, in which sense I understand that Scripture, *Mat.* 3. 12. spoken of Christ, when he was entring upon his Ministerial work, *His fan is in his hand, and he shall throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.* The preaching of the Gospel is as a fan in Christs hand, and it is as much as if *John* had thus told the *Jews*, that though there were many hypocritical ones among them, that had now a place and name among the people of God, and gloried in their Church-priviledges, yet there is a purging blast of truth coming, which shall make them flye out of the Church, as fast as chaff out of the floor. Thus Christ winnows or fans the world doctrinally: The other is *judicially*, by bringing sore and grievous tryals and sufferings upon the Churches, for this very end, that those which are but chaff, (*i. e.*) empty and vain Professors may by such winds as these, be separated from his people.

The Church increases two wayes, and by two divers means, *extensively*, in breadth and numbers, and *intensively*, in vigour and power; peace and prosperity causes the first, sufferings and adversity the last; and well may a day of persecution

secution be called a winnowing day, for then are the people of God tossed to purpose, as corn in the sieve, though nothing but chaff be lost thereby. Of such a winnowing day the Prophet speaks, *Amos* 9. 9, 10. *I will sift the house of* Israel *among all Nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth, all the sinners of my people shall die* (*q. d.*) I will cause great agitations and tossings among you by the hands of the *Assyrians* and *Babylonians*, into whose Countryes you shall be dispersst and scattered, yet I will so govern those your dispersions by my providence, that not one good grain, one upright soul shall eternally perish; but the sinners of my people, the refuse stuff, that shall perish.

To the same purpose speaks another Prophet, *Zeph.* 1.1,2. *Gather your selves together*, (or as some read) *fan your selves*, yea, fan your selves, *before the decree bring forth, and the day pass as the chaff.* He doth not mean, that the time shall pass as the chaff, but there is a day of affliction and distress coming, in which the wicked shall pass as the chaff before the wind; and yet notwithstanding, all these winnowings upon earth, much chaff will still abide among the corn; therefore God hath appointed another day, for the winnowing of the world, even the day of judgment, in reference to which it is said, *Psal.* 1. 4, 5. *The ungodly are not so, but are like the chaff which the wind drives away; therefore the ungodly shall not stand in judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous*; (*i. e.*) God hath a day wherein he will sift the world, like corn in a sieve, and then the wicked shall appear to be but chaff, Which God will eternally separate from his wheat I will not strain the similitude, but fairly display it in these seven particulars.

The chaff and wheat grow together in the same field, and upon the same root and stalk. In this, wicked men are like chaff, who not only associate with the people of God, but oftentimes spring up with them in the same families, and from the same root, or immediate parents, *Mal.* 1. 2. *was not Esau, Jacobs brother*; yet the one was wheat, the other chaff. Instances of this are infinite. 1.

The

2. The Husbandman would never endure the husks, chaff, and dry ſtalks to remain in the field, if it were not for the good corns ſake; he would quickly ſet fire on it, but that the corn is among it, which he highly prizeth; and be aſſured, God would never ſuffer the wicked to abide long in this world, were it not for his own elect that are diſperſed among them. Except the Lord had ſuch a remnant diſperſed in the world, he would quickly ſet fire to the four quarters, and make it like *Sodom*, *Iſa.* 1. 9.

3. The chaff is a very worthleſs thing, the Husbandman cares not what becomes of it, and of as little worth are wicked men, *Prov.* 10. 20. *The heart of the wicked is little worth.* The heart is the principal part of the man, and yet that's but chaff, no worth in it; his lands, his cloaths, &c. are worth ſomewhat, but his heart is worth nothing.

4 Though chaff in it ſelf be nothing worth, yet, it is of ſome uſe to the corn whiles 'tis ſtanding in the field; the ſtalk bears up the ear, and the chaff covers the grain, and defends it from the injury of the weather. Thus God makes wicked men of uſe to his people, in outward ſociety; they help to ſupport and protect them in this world, *Rev.* 12. 16. The earth helped the woman, (*i. e.*) worldly men for carnal ends helpt the Church, when a floud of perſecution was poured out. The Church often helps the world, it receives many benefits from the people of God; and ſometimes God overrules the world to help his Church.

5. When the chaff and wheat are both brought forth and held up to the wind in one ſieve, they fall two wayes; the wheat falls down upon the floor or ſheet, the chaff is carried quite away: So although for a time godly and ungodly abide together, yet, when this winnowing time comes, Gods wheat ſhall be gathered into his garner in heaven, the chaff ſhall go the other way, *Mat.* 3. 12.

6 If there be any chaff among the corn, it will appear when it is ſifted in a windy day, it cannot poſſibly eſcape if it be well winnowed; much more impoſſible it is for any wicked man to eſcape the critical ſearch of God in that day; the cloſeſt hypocrite ſhall then be detected, for God will judge

judge the secrets of men, 2 *Cor.* 16. *He will then bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the heart*, 1 *Cor.* 4. 5.

Lastly, after corn and chaff are separated by the winnowing wind, they shall never lye together in one heap any more. The wicked shall see *Abraham*, and *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and all the Prophets in the Kingdom of God, but themselves thrust out; there is no chaff in heaven, 7.

REFLECTIONS.

AM I an empty vain Professor, that want the pith and substance of real godliness; then am I but chaff in Gods account, though I grow among his corn; the eye of man cannot discern my hypocrisie, but when he comes, whose fan is in his hand, then how plainly will it be detected? Angels and men shall discern it, and say, *Lo, this is the man that made not God his hope*; how shall I abide the day of his coming? Christ is the great heart-Anatomist; things shall not be carried then, by names and parties, as they are now; every one shall be weighed in a just ballance, and a *Mene Tekel*, written upon every false heart; great will be the perspicuity of that trial, my own conscience shall joyn with my judge, and shall then acknowledge, that there is not one drop of injustice in all that Sea of wrath; and though I am damned, yet I am not wronged; the chaff cannot stand before the wind, nor I before the judgment of Christ. 1 *A Reflection for a close Hypocrite.*

Is there such a fanning time coming? why do not I then sift my heart every day, by serious self-examination; no work more important to me, and yet how much have I neglected it? O my soul! thou hadst been better imployed, in searching thine own estate in reference to that day, than in prying sinfully into the hearts, and censuring the conditions of other men; judge thy self, and thou shalt not be condemned with the world; the work indeed is difficult, but the neglect dangerous: were I within a few days to stand at mans bar, there to be tryed for my life, how busie should I be every hour of the day in writing to any that I thought could befriend 2. *A Reflection for one that neglects self-examination.*

befriend me? and ſtudying every advantage to my ſelf? and yet, what a vaſt difference is there between mans bar and Gods? between a tryal for my life, and for my ſoul? Lord, rouze up my ſluggiſh heart by awful and ſolicitous thoughts of that day, leſt I be found among that chaff, which ſhall be burnt up with unquenchable fire!

3. *A* Reflection for a ſincere ſoul.

Fear not, O my ſoul! though there be a blaſt coming which ſhall drive all the chaff into hell, yet it ſhall blow thee no harm. *I know that when he hath tryed me, I ſhall come forth as gold*, Job 23. 10. I confeſs I have too much chaff about me, but yet I am not altogether chaff? there is a ſolid work of grace upon my ſoul, that will abide the tryal: let the judgment to come be as impartial and exact as its poſſible to be, yet a grain of ſincerity cannot be loſt in it; for *God will not caſt away a perfect* (i.e.) an upright hearted) *man*. *Job* 8. 20. He that's appointed to judg the world is mine; and his imputed righteouſneſs will make me full weight in the balance. Bleſs the Lord (O my ſoul) for ſincerity; this will abide, when common gifts and empty names will flee as the chaff before the wind.

The *Poem*.

(1) Pſal. 35. 5. THe winnowing wind firſt (1) drives the chaff away,
Next light, and hollow grains; thoſe only ſtay
Whoſe weight, and ſolid ſubſtance can endure
This tryal, and ſuch grains are counted pure.
(2) Mat. 3. 12. The corn for uſe (2) is carefully preſerv'd,
(3) Mat. 3. 12. The uſeleſs chaff (3) for burning flames reſerv'd.
No wind but blows ſome good, a Proverb'is;
Glad ſhall I be, if it hold true in this.
O, that the wind when you to winnowing go,
This ſpiritual good unto your ſouls might blow?
To make you pauſe, and ſadly ruminate
In what a doleful plight; and wretched ſtate

Their

Their souls are in, who cannot (4) hope to stand
When he shall come, whose (5) fan is in his hand.
His (6) piercing eyes infallibly disclose,
The very reins, and (7) inward parts of those
Whose out-side seeming grace so neatly paints,
That with the (8) best they pass, for real Saints.
No hypocrite with God (9) acceptance finds,
But like the chaff dispers'd by furious winds:
Their guilt shall not that searching day endure,
Nor they approach (1) th'assemblies of the pure.
Have you observ'd in Autumn, (2) thistle-down
By howling *Eurus* scatter'd up and down
About the fields? even so Gods ireful storm
Shall chase the hypocrite, who now can scorn
The breath of close reproofs; and like a rock
Repel reproofs, and just reprovers mock.
How many that in (3) splendid garments walk
Of high professions! and like Angels talk,
Shall God devest; and openly proclaim
Their secret guilt, to their eternal shame!
This is the day, wherein the Lord will rid
His Church of those false friends, which now lie hid
Among his people. There will not be one
False heart remain, to lose our love upon.
O, bless'd assembly! glorious state! when all
In their uprightness walk, and ever shall.
O make my heart sincere, that I may never
Prove such light chaff as then thy wind will sever.
From solid grain! O let my soul detest
Unsoundness; and abide thy strictest test.

(4) Psa. 1. 5.
(5) Mat. 3. 12.
(6) Rev. 1. 14.
(7) 1 Cor. 4. 5.
(8) Mat. 7. 22.
(9) Job 13. 16.
(1) Psa. 1. 5.
(2) Isa. 17. 13.
(3) Mat. 25. 7.

An Introduction

TO THE

Second PART

OF

HUSBANDRY.

HOw is it Reader? have I tired thee? (with me.
Whilſt through theſe pleaſant fields thou walk'ſt
Our path was pleaſant, but if length of way
Do weary thee, we'l ſlack our pace, and ſtay;
Let's ſit a while, under the cooling ſhade
Of fragrant Trees; Trees were for ſhadow made.
Lo here a pleaſant grove, whoſe ſhade is good;
But more than ſo, 'twill yield us fruit for food.
No dangerous fruits do on theſe branches grow,
No ſnakes among the verdant graſs below.
Here we'l repoſe a while, and then go view
The pleaſant herds and flocks: and ſo adieu.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

Ungraffed Trees can never bear good fruit.
Nor we till graffed on a better root.

Uppn the ing affing of fruit Trees

OBSERVATION.

A Wild tree naturally ſpringing up in the wood or hedge, and never graffed or removed from its native ſoyl, may bear ſome fruit, and that fair and beautiful to the eye; but it will give you no content at all in eating, being alwayes harſh, ſower and unpleaſant to the taſte; but if ſuch a ſtock be removed into a good ſoyl, and graffed with a better kind, it may become a good tree, and yield ſtore of choice and pleaſant fruit.

APPLICATION.

UNregenerate men who never were acquainted with the myſtery of ſpiritual union with Jeſus Chriſt, but ſtill grow upon their natural root, old *Adam*, may by the force and power of natural principles bring forth ſome fruit, (which like the wild hedge fruit we ſpeak of) may indeed be fair and pleaſant to the eyes of men, but God takes no pleaſure at all in it; its ſower, harſh, and diſtaſteful to him, becauſe it ſprings not from the ſpirit of Chriſt, *Iſa.* 1. 13. *I cannot away with it, it is iniquity*, &c. but that I may not intangle the thred of my diſcourſe, I ſhall (as in the former Chapters) ſet before you a parallel betwixt the beſt fruits of natural men, and thoſe of a wild ungraffed tree.

1. The root that bears this wild fruit is a degenerate root, and that's the cauſe of all this ſowerneſs and harſhneſs in the fruit it bears; it's the ſeed of ſome better Tree accidentally blown, or caſt into ſome waſte and bad ſoyl, where not beinh manured

manured and ordered aright, it's turned wild: So all the fruits of unregenerate men flow from the first *Adam*, a corrupt and degenerate root; he was indeed planted aright seed, but soon turned a wild and degenerate plant; he being the root from which every man naturally springs, corrupts all the fruit that any man bears from him. It's observed by *Gregory*, pertinent to my present purpose, *Genus humanum in parente primo, velut in radice putruit*; Mankind was putrified in the root of his first parent, *Mat.* 7. 18. *A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit.*

This corrupt root spoyles the fruit, by the transmission of its sower and naughty sap into all the branches and fruits that grow on them; they suck no other nourishment, but what the root affords them, and that being bad, spoyles all: for the same cause and reason, no meer natural or unregenerate man can ever do one holy or acceptable action, because the corruption of the root is in all those actions. The necessity of our drawing corruption into all our actions, from this cursed root *Adam*, is expressed by a quick and smart Interrogation, *Job* 14. 4. *Who can bring a clean thing, out of an unclean? not one.* The sense of it is well delivered us (by Mr. *Caryl in loc.*). This question (saith he) may undergo a threefold construction; First, thus: Who can bring a morally-clean person, out of a person originally unclean? and so he layes his hand upon his birth-sin. Or, Secondly, (which speaks to my purpose) it may refer to the action of the same man, man being unclean, cannot bring forth a clean thing; (*i. e.*) a clean or holy action; that which is originated, is like its original. And that this sower sap of the first stock (I mean *Adams* sin) is transmitted into all mankind, not only corrupting their fruit, but ruining and withering all the branches; the *Apostle* shews us in that excellent parallel betwixt the two *Adams*, Rom. 5. 12. *Wherefore as by one man*] one, not only *in individuo, sed in specie*, one representing the whole root or stock, *sin entered into the World*] not by imitation only, but by propagation? and this brought death and ruin upon all the branches.

2.

Although these wild hedge-fruits be unwholsom and unpleasant

3.

pleasant to the taste, yet they are fair and beautiful to the eye; a man that looks upon them, and doth not know what fruit it is, would judg it by its shew and colour to be excellent fruit; for it makes a fairer shew oftentimes, than the best and most wholsome fruit doth: Even so, those natural gifts and endowments which some unregenerate persons have, seem exceeding fair to the eye, and a fruit to be desired. What excellent qualities have some meer natural men and women? what a winning affability? humble condescention, meekness, righteousness, ingenuous tenderness and sweetness of nature! As it was (hyperbolically enough) said of one, *In hoc homine, non peccavit Adam*; *Adam* never sinned in this man; meaning, that he excelled the generality of *Adams* children in sweetness of temper and natural endowments. What curious phantasies, nimble wits, solid judgments, tenacious memories, rare elocution, &c. are to be found among meer natural men? by which they are assisted in discoursing, praying, preaching and writing, to the admiration of such as know them! But that which is highly esteemed of men, is abomination to God, *Luke* 16.15. it finds no acceptance with him, because it springs from that cursed root of nature, and is not the production of his own Spirit.

4. If such a stock were removed into a better soyl, and grafted with a better kind, it might bring forth fruit, pleasant and grateful to the Husbandman; and if such persons (before described) were but regenerated and changed in their spirits and principles, what excellent and useful persons would they be in the Church of God? and then their fruits would be sweet and acceptable to him. One observes of *Tertullian*, *Origen* and *Jerome*, that they came into *Canaan*, laden with *Egyptian* gold, (*i. e.*) they came into the Church full of excellent humane learning, which did Christ much service.

5. When the Husbandman cuts down his woods or hedges, he cuts down these Crab-stocks with the rest, because he values them not any more than the thorns and brambles among which they grow; and as little will God regard or spare these natural branches, how much soever they are laden with such fruit. The threatning is universal, *John* 3.3. *Except you be*

be regenerate and born again, you cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again, *Heb.* 12. 14. *Without holiness, no man* (be his natural gifts never so excellent) *shall see God.* Imbelished nature, is nature still; *That which is born of the flesh, is but flesh*, however it be set off with advantage to the eye of man.

REFLECTIONS.

I. A Reflection for an accomplished Naturalist.

TO what purpose then do I glory in my natural accomplishments? Though I have a better nature than some others have, yet it is a cursed nature still. These sweet qualities and excellent gifts, do only hide, but not kill the corruption of nature. I am but a rotten post gilded over, and all my duties but hedge fruit, which God makes no account of. O cutting thought! that the unlearned shall rise and take heaven, when I with all my excellent gifts shall descend into hell. Heaven was not made for Scholars, as such, but for believers: as one said, when they comforted him upon his death-bed, that he was a knowing man, a *Doctor of Divinity*: O, said he, I shall not appear before God as a *Doctor*, but as a man; I shall stand upon a level with the most illiterate, in the day of judgment; what doth it avail me that I have a nimble wit, whilst I have none to do my self good? Will my Judge be charm'd with a rhetorical tongue? Things will not be carried in that world, as they are in this. If I could with *Berengarius* discourse *de omni scibile*, of every thing that is knowable; or with *Solomon* unravel nature, from the *Cedar* to the *Hyssope*, what would this advantage me, as long as I am ignorant of *Christ*, and the mystery of Regeneration? My head hath often aked with study, but when did my heart ake for sin? Methinks, O my soul, thou trimmest up thy self in these natural ornaments to appear before God, much as that delicate *Agag* did, when he was to come before *Samuel*, and fondly conceitest that these things will procure favour or (at least) pity from him? but yet, think not for all that, *the bitterness of death is past*; say not within thy self, Will God cast such a one as I into hell? Shall a man of such

parts be damned? Alas! justice will hew thee to pieces, as *Samuel* did that spruce King, and not abate thee the least, for these things; many thousand branches of nature, as fair and fruitful as thy self, are now blazing in hell, because not transplanted by regeneration into *Christ*; and if he spared not them, neither will he spare thee.

2. A Reflection for a true, but weak Believer.

I am a poor despised Shrub, which have no beauty at all in me, and yet such a one hath the Lord chosen to transplant into *Christ*, whilst he left many fragrant branches standing on their native stock, to be fuel of his wrath to all eternity! O grace for ever to be admired! Ah, what cause have I to be thankful to free grace, and for ever to walk humbly with my God: the Lord hath therefore chosen an unlikely, rugged, unpolisht creature as I am, that pride may for ever be hid from mine eyes, and that I may never glory in his presence, 1 *Cor.* 1. 29. I now have the advantage of a better root and soyl then any carnal person hath, it will therefore be a greater shame to me, and a reproach to the root that bears me, if I should be out-stript and excelled by them; yet Lord, how often do I find it so? I see some of them meek and patient, whilst I am proud and passionate; gentle and affable, whilst I am rough and surly; generous and noble, whilst I am base and penurious. Truly, such a branch as I am, is no honour to the root that bears it.

The *POEM.*

I Am a branch of that fair *Eden* Tree
Which to (1) mankind God had ordain'd to be
The common stock, his (2) scituation good,
His (3) branches many, of himself a wood.
And like a Cedar by the River fed,
Unto the clouds his ample branches spread.
Sin smote (4) his root, then justice cut him down;
And level'd with the earth his lofty Crown.

(1) 1 Cor. 15. 45.
(2) Eccl. 7. 9.
(3) Deut. 32. 8.
(4) Rom. 5. 12.

What

What hode of branches, when the (5) tree's o'return'd?
But like (6) dry faggots to be bound and burn'd.
It had been so, had not (7) transcendent love,
Which in a sphear above our thonguts doth move
Prepar'd a better (8) stock, to save and nourish
Transplanted twigs, which in him thrive and flourish.
In *Adam* all are (9) curs'd, no saving fruit
Shall ever spring, from that sin blasted root.
Yea all the branches that in him are found,
How (1) flourishing soever must be bound
And pil'd together, horrid news to tell!
To make an everlasting blaze in hell.
God takes no pleasure in the sweetest bud
Disclos'd by nature, for the root's not good.
Some (2) boughs indeed richly adorned are
With natural fruits, which to the eye are fair,
Rare (3) Gifts, sweet dispositions, which attracts
The love of thousands, and from most exacts
Honour, and admiration. You'l admire
That such as these, are fewel for the fire.
Indeed ten thousand pities 'tis to see
Such lovely creatures in this case to be.
Did they by true Regeneration draw
The sap of life from *Jesses* root, (4) the Law
By which they now to wrath condemned are
Would cease to curse, and God such buds would spare.
But out of him, there's none of these can move
His unrelenting heart, or draw his love.
Then cut me off, from this accursed Tree;
Lest I for ever be cut off from thee.

(5) Rom. 5. 18
(6) Joh. 15. 6
(7) Joh. 3. 16.
(8) 1 Cor. 15 47.
(9) Gal. 3. 10.
(1) Heb. 12. 14
(2) Mark 10. 20, 21.
(3) Heb. 6. 4, 5.
(4) Rom. 8. 2.

CHAP. II.

Upon the union of the graff with the ſtock.

When ere you bud or graft, therein you ſee;
How Chriſt, and ſouls muſt here united be.

OBSERVATION.

WHen the Husbandman hath prepared his graffs in the ſeaſon of the year, he carries them, with the tools that are neceſſary for that work, to the tree or ſtock he intends to ingraft; and having cut of the top of the limb, in ſome ſtrait ſmooth part, he cleaves it with his knife or chiſſel, a little beſide the pith; knocks in his wedge to keep it open, then (having prepared the graff, he carefully ſets it into the cleft, joyning the inner ſide of the barks, of graff and ſtock together (there being the maic current of the ſap) then pulls out his wedge, binds both together (as in barking) and clayes it up, to defend the tender graff and wounded ſtock, from the injuries of the Sun and rain.

Theſe tender cyences quickly take hold of the ſtock, and having immediate coalition with it, drink in its ſap, concoct it into their own nouriſhment, thrive better, and bear more and better fruits than ever they would have done upon their natural root, yea, the ſmalleſt bud, being carefully inoculated and bound cloſe to the ſtock, will in ſhort time become a flouriſhing and fruitful limb.

APPLICATION.

THis carries a moſt ſweet and lively reſemblance, of the ſouls union with Chriſt by faith; and indeed there is nothing in nature that ſhadows forth this great Goſpel-myſtery like it: 'Tis a thouſand pities, that any who are imployed about, or are but ſpectators of ſuch an action, ſhould terminate their thoughts (as too many do) in that natural object,

object, and not raise up their hearts to these heavenly meditations, which it so fairly offers them.

When a twig is to be ingrafted, or a bud inocculated, it's first cut off by a keen knife from the Tree on which it naturally grew. 1.

And when the Lord intends to graft a soul into Christ, the first work about it is cutting work, *Acts* 2. 37. their hearts were cut by conviction and deep compunction; no cyence is ingrafted without cutting, no soul united with Christ without a cutting sense of sin and misery, *John* 16. 1, 8.

When the tender shoot is cut off from the Tree, there are (ordinarily) many more left behind upon the same Tree, as promising and vigorous as that which is taken; but it pleaseth the Husbandman to chuse this, and leave them. 2.

Even so it is in the removing or transplanting of a soul by conversion, it leaves many behind it in the state of nature, as likely and promising as it self; but so it pleaseth God to take this soul, and leave many others; yea, often such as grew upon the same root; I mean, the immediate parent, *Mal.* 1. 2. *was not* Esau, Jacob's *brother (saith the Lord) yet I loved* Jacob, *and I hated* Esau.

When the graffs are cut off, in order to this work, 'tis a critical season with them; if they lye too long before they are ingrafted, or take not with the stock, they dye, and are never more to be recovered; they may stand in the stock a while, but are no part of the Tree. 3.

So when souls are under a work of conviction, it is a critical time with them; many a one have I known then to miscarry, and never recovered again; they have indeed for a time stood like dead graffs in the stock, by an external dead hearted profession, but never came to any thing; and as such dead graffs, either fall off from the stock, or moulder away upon it, so do these, 1 *John.* 2. 19.

The Husbandman when he hath cut off graffs, or tender buds, makes all the convenient speed he can to close them with the stock; the sooner that's done, the better; they get no good by remaining as they are. And truly it concerns the servants of the Lord, who are imployed in this work, of ingrafting 4.

ingraffing souls into Christ, to make all the haste they can, to bring the convicted sinner to a closure with Christ. As soon as ever the trembling Jaylor cryed out, *What shall I do to be saved? Paul* and *Silas* immediately direct him to *Christ*, Act. 16. 30. 31. They do not say, it's too soon for thee to act faith on *Christ*, thou art not yet humbled enough, but believe in the Lord *Jesus Christ*, *and thou shalt be saved*.

5. There must be an incision made in the stock before any bud can be inocculated, or the stock must be cut and cleaved, before the cyence can be ingraffed according to that in the Poet. *Venerit insitio, fac ramum ramus adoptet.* (i. e.)

To graffs, no living sap the stocks impart;
Unless you wound, and cut them neer the heart.

Such an incision or wound, was made upon *Christ*, in order to our ingraffing into him, *John* 19. 34. the opening of that deadly wound gives life to the souls of believers.

The graff is intimately united, and closly conjoyned with the stock, the conjunction is so clos, that they become one Tree.

6. There is also a most clos and intimate union betwixt Christ, and the soul that believeth in him. It is emphatically expressed by the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 6. 17. *He that is joyned to the Lord, is one spirit.* The word imports, the neareſt, closeſt and strictest union. *Christ* and the soul cleave together in a blessed oneness, as those things do that are glewed one to another; so that, look as the graff is really in the stock, and the spirit or sap of the stock is really in the graff, so a believer is really (though mystically) in *Christ*; and the Spirit of *Christ* is really communicated to a believer. *I live*, saith *Paul*, *yet not I but Christ liveth in me*, Gal. 2. 20. *He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him*, 1 Joh. 4. 16.

7. Graffs are bound to the stock, by bonds made of hay or flags; these keep it steddy, else the wind would loose it out of the stock.

The believing soul is also fastened to Christ, by bands which will secure it from all danger of being loosed off from him any more. There are two bonds of this union; the Spirit on God's part, this is the firm bond of union, without which

which we could never be made one with Christ, *Rom.* 8. 9. *If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his*; and *faith* on our part. *Eph* 3. 17. *That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.* Th se hold strongly.

Though the stock be one and the same, yet all graffs do not thrive and flourish alike in it, some out-grow the rest; and those that grow not so well as the others do, the fault is in them, and not in the stock: So it is with souls really united to *Christ*; all do not flourish alike in him, the faith of some *grows* exceedingly, 2 *Thes.* 1. 3. the things that be in others are ready to dye *Rev.* 3. 2. and such souls must charge the fault upon themselves. *Christ* sends up living sap enough, not only to make all that are in him living, but fruitful branches. 8

REFLECTIONS.

Four comfortable Reflections for a regenerate soul. 1.

IS it so indeed betwixt *Christ* and my soul, as it is betwixt the ingraffed cyence and the stock? what honour and glory then hath Christ conferred upon me, a poor unworthy creature? What! to be made one with him, to be a living branch of him, to be joyned thus to the Lord. Oh! what a preferment is this! it is but a little while since I was a wild and cursed plant, growing in the wilderness amongst them that shall shortly be cut down and faggoted up for hell, for me to be taken from amongst them, and planted into Christ, O my soul! fall down and kiss the feet of free grace, that moved so freely towards so vile a creature! the dignities and honours of the Kings and Nobles of the earth, are nothing to mine; 'twas truly confessed by one of them, that it is a greater honour to be a member of Christ, than the head of an Empire. Do I say, a greater honour than is put upon the Kings of the Earth? I might have said, it's a greater honour than is put upon the Angels of heaven? for to which of them said Christ at any time, thou art bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh? *Behold! what manner of love is this!* 1 Joh. 3. 1.

Look again upon the ingraffed cyences, O my soul! and thou shalt find, that when once they have taken hold of the stock, 2.

ſtock, they live as long as there is any ſap in the root; and becauſe he liveth, I ſhall live alſo, for my life is hid with Chriſt in God, *Col.* 3. 3. The graff is preſerved in the ſtock, and my ſoul is even ſo, *preſerved in Chriſt Jeſus*, Jud. 1.

3. Am I joyned to the Lord as myſtical part, or branch of him; how dear art thou then, O my ſoul, to the God and father of my Lord Jeſus Chriſt? What! a branch of his dear Son! What can God with-hold from one ſo ingratiated? *Eph.* 1. 6. *All is yours* (ſaith my God) *for ye are Chriſts, and Chriſt is Gods*, 1 *Cor.* 3. 23.

4. Once more, draw matter of inſtruction, as well as comfort from this ſweet obſervation. Seeing God hath put all this honour upon thee, by this moſt intimate union with his Chriſt, look to it (my ſoul) that thou live and walk as becomes a ſoul, thus one with the Lord; be thou tender over his glory doth not that which ſtrikes at the root, ſtrike at the very life of the graff? and ſhall not that which ſtrikes at the very glory of Chriſt, tenderly touch and affect thee? yea, be thou tenderly affected with all the reproaches that fall upon him from abroad, but eſpecially with thoſe which redound to him from thine own unfruitfulneſs. O, diſgrace not the root that bears thee; let it never be ſaid, that any evil fruit ſhall be found upon a branch that lives and fed is by ſuch a root.

The *POEM.*

OH what conſidering ſerious man can ſee
The cloſe conjunction of the graff and tree;
And whilſt he contemplates he doth not find,
This meditation graffed on his mind?

(1) Joh. 15. 5. I am the (1) branch, and Chriſt the vine
thy gracious hand did pluck
(2) Rom. 11. 17. Me from that native (2) ſtock of mine,
that I his ſap might ſuck.

The

The bloudy (3) ſpear did in his heart
a deep inciſſion make,
That grace to me he might impart,
and I thereof partake. (3) Joh. 19. 34.

The ſpirit (4) and faith is that firm band,
which binds us faſt together; (4) Rom. 8. 9. Eph. 3. 17.
Thus we are claſped (5) hand in hand; (5) Cant. 2. 16.
and (6) nothing us can ſever. (6) Rom. 8. 35.

Bleſs'd be that hand which did remove,
me from my native place,
This was the (7) wonder of thy love; (7) 1 Joh. 3. 1.
the triumph of thy grace.

That I a wild (8) and curſed plant, (8) Ro. 11. 17.
ſhould thus preferred be;
Who all thoſe (9) ornaments do want, (9) Mat. 11. 25.
thou may'ſt in others ſee.

As long as e're the root doth live,
the branches are not dry;
Whilſt Chriſt hath grace, and life to give;
my ſoul can never (1) dye. (1) Joh. 14. 19.

O bleſſed Saviour! never could
a graff cleave to the tree,
More (2) cloſs than thy poor creature would (2) Cant. 8. 6.
united be with thee.

My ſoul, diſhonour not thy root,
'twill be a ſhame for thee;
To want the choiceſt ſorts of fruit,
and yet thus grafted (3) be. (3) Iſa. 5. 4.

Thus you may ſhake from graffs before they blow,
More precious fruit than e're on trees did grow.

CHAP. III.

Upon the gathering in of fruits in Autumn.

When Trees are ſhak'd, but little fruit remains;
Juſt ſuch a remnant to the Lord pertains.

OBSERVATION.

IT is a pleaſant ſight in Autumn, to ſee the fruitful branches hanging full of cluſters, which weigh the boughs to the ground.

Aſpice curvatos pomorum pondere ramos
Ut ſua quod peperit vix ferat arbor onus.
Which I may thus Engliſh,
O What a pleaſant ſight it is to ſee,
The fruitful cluſters bowing down the tree.

But theſe laden branches are ſoon eaſed of their burden, for as ſoon as they are ripe, the Husbandman aſcends the tree, and ſhaking the limbs with all his might, cauſes a fruitful ſhower to fall like hailſtones upon the ground below, which being gather'd to a heap, are carried to the pound, broken all to pieces in the trough, and ſqueez'd to a dry lump in the preſs, whence all their juice and moiſture runs into the Fat. How few eſcape this Fat, of all thoſe multitudes that grew in the Orchard? If you now look upon the Trees, you may poſſibly ſee here one, and there another, two or three upon the outmoſt branches; but nothing in compariſon to the vaſt numbers that are thus uſed.

APPLICATION.

THis ſmall remains of fruit, which are either left upon the tree, or gather'd in for an hoard, do well reſemble that ſmall number of Gods elect in the world, which free

grace

grace hath reserved out of the general ruine of mankind. Four things are excellently shadowed forth to us by this similitude.

You see in a fruitful Autumn, the trees even oppresst and overladen with the weight of their own fruits before the shaking time come, and then they are eased of their burden. Thus, the whole creation groans under the weight of their sins who inhabit it, *Rom.* 8.22. the creatures are in bondage, and by an elegant *Prosopopeia*, are said, both to groan and wait for deliverance. The original sin of man brought an original curse, which burdens the creature, *Gen.* 3.17. *Cursed is the ground for thy sake*; and the actual sin of man brings actual curses upon the creature, *Psal.* 107.34. Thus the inhabitants of the world load and burden it, as the limbs of a tree are burdened, and sometimes broken with the weight of their own fruit. 1.

You may observe it in your Orchards every year, what abundance of fruits daily fall, either by storms, or of their own accord; but when the shaking time comes, then the ground is covered all over with fruit. Thus it is with the world, that mistical tree, with respect to men, that inhabit it; there is not a year, day or hour, in which some drop not, as it were, of their own accord by a natural death; and sometimes wars and Epidemical plagues blow down thousands together into their graves, these are as high winds in a fruitful Orchard, but when the shaking time, the Autumn of the world comes; then all its inhabitants shall be shaken down together, either by death, or a translation equivolent thereunto. 2.

When fruits are shaken down from their trees, then the Husbandman separates them; the far greatest part for the pound, and some few he reserves for an hoard, which are brought to his table, and eaten with pleasure. This excellently shadows forth that great separation, which Christ will make in the end of the world; when some shall be cast into the wine-press of the *Almighties* wrath, and others preserved for glory. 3.

Those fruits which are preserved on the tree, or in the

hoard, are comparatively but an handful to those that are broken in the pound. Alas! 'tis scarce one of a thousand, and such a small remnant of Elected souls hath God reserved for glory.

I look upon the World as a great Tree, consisting of four large limbs or branches; this branch or division of it on which we grow, hath doubtless a greater number of Gods elect upon it, than the other three; and yet when I look with a serious and considering eye upon this fruitful *European* branch, and see how much rotten and withered fruit there grows upon it, it makes me say as *Chrysostom* did of his populous *Antioch*, Ah, how small a remnant hath *Jesus Christ* among these vast numbers! *Many* indeed *are called*, but, ah, *how few are chosen*! Mat. 20. 16. Alas! they are but as the gleanings when the vintage is done; here and there one upon its outmost branches. To allude to that, *Isa.* 17. 6. it was a sad Observation which that searching Scholar (Mr. *Brierwood*) long since made upon the world, that dividing it into thirty equal parts, he found no less than nineteen of them wholly overspread with Idolatry and Heathenish darkness; and of the eleven remaining parts, no less than six are *Mahumetans*; so that there remain but five of thirty, which profess the Christian Religion at large; and the far greater part of these remaining, five are invellop'd and drowned in Popish darkness; so that you see the reformed *Protestant Religion* is confined to a small spot of ground indeed. Now, if from these we substract all the grosly ignorant, openly profane, meerly civil, and secretly hypocritical; judg then in your selves, how small a scantling of the world falls to Christs share!

Well might Christ say, *Mat.* 7. 14. *Narrow is the way, and strait is the gate, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.* And again, *Luke* 12. 32. *Fear not, little, little flock.* The large piece goes to the devil, a little remnant is Christs, *Rom.* 9. 27. Saints in Scripture are called *jewels*, Mal. 3. 17. precious pearls and diamonds, which the Latines call *Uniones. Quia nulli duo simul reperiuntur* (saith *Pliny*) because nature gives them not by pairs, but one by one. How many pebbles

pebbles to one pearl? Sutable to this notion, is that complaint of the Prophet, *Mich.* 7. 1, 2. *Wo is me, for I am as when they have gathered the Summer fruits, as the grape gleanings of the vintage, there is no cluster to eat; my soul desired the first ripe fruits; the good man is perished out of the earth, and there is none* (*i. e.* none comparatively) *upright among men.* The *Prophet* alludes to a poor hungry man, that after the gathering time is past, comes into an Orchard, desiring some choice fruits to eat, but alas! he finds none; there is no cluster; possibly here and there a single Saint, like a single apple, here and there one after the shaking time. True Saints are the worlds rarities.

REFLECTIONS.

WHat then will be my lot, when that great shaking time shall come, who have followed the multitude, and gone with the tyde of the world? how even when I have been pressed to strictness and singular diligence in the matters of salvation, and told what a narrow way the way of life is, have I put it off with this; If it be so, then wo to thousands. Ah, foolish heart! thousands and ten thousands shall be wofull and miserable indeed, to all eternity. Will it be any mitigation to my misery, that I shall have thousands of miserable companions with me in hell? or will it be admitted for a good plea at the Judgment-seat, Lord, I did as the generality of my neighbours in the world did; except it were here and there a more precise person, I saw none, but lived as I lived. Ah, foolish sinner! Is it not better go to heaven alone, than to hell with company? the worst courses, have alwayes the most imitators, and the road to destruction is thronged with passengers.

1. A Reflection for one that follows the example of the multitude.

And how little better is my condition? who have often fathered the wickedness of my own heart, upon the incouragements of mercy. Thus hath my heart pleaded against strictness and duty. God is a merciful God, and will not be so severe with the world to damn so many thousands as are in my condition; Deluded soul, if God had damned the whole race

2. A Reflection for an abuser of mercy.

race of *Adam*, he had done them no wrong; yea, there is more mercy in ſaving but one man, than there is of ſeverity and rigour in damning all: how many drunkards and adulterers have lived and dyed with thy plea in their mouths? *God is a merciful God*; but yet his word expreſly ſaith, *Be not deceived, ſuch not ſhall inherit the Kingdom of God.* 1 Cor. 6. 9. God indeed, is a God of infinite mercy; but he will never exerciſe his mercy to the prejudice of his truth.

1. A Reflection for an elect ſoul.

O, what rich grace is here! that in a general Shipwrack mercy ſhould caſt forth a line or plank to ſave me! that when millions periſh, I with a few more ſhould eſcape that perdition. Was it the Fathers good pleaſure to beſtow the kingdom upon a little flock, and to make me one of that number? What ſingular obligations hath mercy put upon my ſoul! the fewer are ſaved, the more cauſe have they that are, to admire their Saviour! If but one of a thouſand had been damned, yet my ſalvation would have been an act of infinite grace; but when ſcarce one of a thouſand are ſaved, what ſhall I call that grace, that caſt my lot among them!

The *Poem.*

HE that with ſpiritual eyes in Autumn ſees
The heaps of fruit which fall from ſhaken trees,
Like ſtorms of hailſtones; and can hardly find
One of a thouſand that remains behind.
Methinks this Meditation ſhould awake
His ſoul, and make it like thoſe trees to ſhake.
Of all the cluſters which ſo lately grew
Upon theſe trees, how few can they now ſhew?
(1) Iſa. 17. 6. Here one (1) and there another; two or three
Upon the outmoſt branches of the tree.
The greateſt numbers to the pound are born,
Squeez'd in the trough; and all to pieces torn:

This

This little handful's left, to shadow forth
To me Gods (2) remnant in this peopl'd earth.
If o're the whole terrestrial globe I look,
The Gospel visits but (3) a little nook.
The rest with horrid (4) darkness overspread,
Are fast asleep; yea, in transgressions dead,
Whole droves to hell, the devil daily drives;
Not one amongst them once (5) resists or strives.
And in this little heaven-inlightned spot,
How vast an interest hath Satan got?
But few of holiness profession make,
And if from those that do profes I take
The self-deluding hypocrites, I fear
To think how few (6) remain that are sincere.
O tax not mercy that it saves so few,
But rather wonder that the Lord should shew
Mercy to any; (7) quarrel not with grace,
But for thy self Gods gracious terms embrace.
When all were (8) Shipwrackt, thou shouldst wonder more
To find thy self so strangely cast ashore
And there to meet with any that can tell
How narrowly they also (9) scap'd from hell.
The smaller numbers mercy saves, the higher
Ingagements lye on thee (1) still to admire.
Had the whole *species* perish'd in their sin,
And not one individual saved bin;
Yet every (2) tongue before him must be mute,
Confes his righteousness; but not dispute.
Or had the hand of mercy which is (3) free
Taken another, and pass'd over me;
I still must justifie him, and my tongue
Cofes my maker had done me no wrong.
But if my (4) name he please to let me see
Enroll'd among those few that saved be,
What admiration should such mercy move!
What thanks, and (5) praise, and everlasting love!

(2) Rom. 9. 27.
(3) 1 Joh. 5. 19. Psal. 147. 20.
(4) Psa. 74. 20.
(5) 2 Tim. 2. 26
(6) Mat. 7. 14.
(7) Rom 9. 20.
(8) Rom. 5. 16.
(9) 1 Pet. 4. 18.
(1) Joh. 14. 22.
(2) Rom. 9. 18.
(3) Rom. 5. 15.
(4) Heb. 12. 23
(5) Rev. 1. 5, 6.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Upon the cuting down of dead trees.

Dead barren Trees you for the fire prepare,
In such a case, all fruitless persons are.

OBSERVATION.

AFter many years patience, in the use of all means to recover a fruit Tree, if the Husbandman see it be quite dead, and that there can be no more expectation of any fruit from it, he brings his ax and hews it down by the root; and from the Orchard its carried to the fire, it being then fit for nothing else; he reckons it imprudent to let such a useless tree abide in good ground, where another might be planted in its room, that will better pay for the ground it stands in. I my self once saw a large Orchard of fair, but fruitless trees, all rooted up, rived abroad, and ricked up for the fire.

APPLICATION.

THus deals the Lord by useless and barren Professors, who do but cumber his ground, *Mat.* 3. 10. *And now also, the ax is laid to the root of the trees; therefore every tree that brings not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire.* And *Luke* 13. 7. *Then said the dresser of the vineyard, Behold, this three years I came seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none; cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?* These three years, alluding to the time of his Ministery, he being at that time entring upon his last half year, as one observes, by harmonizing the Evangelists; so long he had waited for the fruit of his Ministery, among those dead-hearted *Jews*: now his patience is even at an end, cut them down (saith he) why cumber they the ground? I will plant others, (*viz.* the *Gentiles*) in their

their room. This hewing down of the barren tree doth in a lively manner shadow forth Gods judicial proceedings against formal and empty Professors under the Gospel; and the resemblance clearly holds in these following particulars.

1. The tree that is to be hewen down for the fire, stands in the Orchard among other flourishing trees, where it hath enjoyed the benefit of a good soyl, a strong fence and much culture; but being barren, these priviledges secure it not from the fire. It is not our standing in the visible Church, by a powerless profession among real Saints, with whom we have been associated, and enjoyed the rich and excellent waterings of Ordinances, that can secure us from the wrath of God, *Mat.* 3, 8, 9. *Bring forth fruits meet for repentance, and think not to say within your selves, we have* Abraham *to our father.* Neither *Abraham*, nor *Abrahams* God, will acknowledge such degenerate children; if *Abrahams* faith be not in your *hearts*, it will be no advantage that *Abrahams* blood runs in your *veins*. 'Twill be a poor plea for *Judas*, when he shall stand before *Christ* in judgment, to say, Lord, I was one of thy family, I preached for thee, I did eat and drink in thy presence. Let these Scriptures be consulted, *Mat.* 7. 22. *Mat.* 25. 11, 12. *Rom.* 2. 17. *ad* 25.

2. The Husbandman doth not presently cut down the tree, because it puts not forth as soon as other trees do, but waits as long as there is any hope, and then cuts it down. Thus doth God wait upon barren dead-hearted persons, from Sabbath to Sabbath, and from year to year; for the Lord is long-suffering to us-ward, and not willing that any should perish, but all come to repentance, 2 *Pet.* 3. 9. Thus the long suffering of God waited in the dayes of *Noah* upon those dry trees, who are now smoaking and flaming in hell, 1 *Pet.* 3. 20. He waits long on sinners, but keeps exact accounts of every year and day of his patience, *Luke* 13. 7. *These three years.* And *Jer.* 25. 3. These 23 years.

3. When the time is come to cut it down, the dead tree cannot possibly resist the stroke of the ax, but receives the blow, and falls before it. No more can the stoutest sinner resist the fatal stroke of death, by which the Lord hews him

down, *Eccleſ.* 8. 8. *There is no man that hath power over the Spirit, to retain the Spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death, and there is no diſcharge in that war.* When the pale horſe comes, away you muſt into the land of darkneſs; Though thou cry with *Adrian*, O my poor ſoul, whither art thou going! die thou muſt, thou barren Profeſſor; though it were better for thee to do any thing elſe than to die. What a dreadful ſcreech will thy conſcience give, when it ſees the ax at thy root! and ſay to thee, as it is, *Ezek.* 7. 6. *An end is come, the end is come; it watcheth for thee, behold it is come.* O, ſaid, *Henry Beauford*, (that rich and wretched Cardinal, Biſhop of *Wincheſter*, and Chancellor of *England*, when he perceived whereto he muſt) wherefore muſt I die? If the whole Realm would ſave my life, I am able either by policy to get it, or by riches to buy it. Fye (quoth he) will not death be hired? will riches do nothing? No, neither riches nor policy can then avail.

4. That ſide to which the Tree leaned moſt while it ſtood, that way it will fall, when it is cut down; and as it falls ſo it lies, whether to the South or North, *Eccleſ.* 11. 3. So it fares with theſe myſtical trees; I mean fruitleſs Profeſſors. Had their hearts and affections inclined and bended heavenward whilſt they lived, that way no doubt they had fallen at their death; but as their hearts inclined to ſin, and ever bended to the world; ſo when God gives the fatal ſtroke, they muſt fall hell-ward, and wrath-ward; and how dreadful will ſuch a fall be?

5. When the dead tree is carried out of the Orchard, it ſhall never be among the living trees of the Orchard any more; many years it grew among them, but now it ſhall never have a place there again. And when the barren Profeſſor is carried out of the world by death, he ſhall never be aſſociated with the Saints any more. He may then ſay, farewell all ye Saints, among whom I lived, and with whom I ſo often heard, faſted, prayed. I ſhall never ſee your faces more, *Mat.* 8. 11, 12. I ſay unto you, that many ſhall come from the Eaſt and Weſt, and North and South, and ſhall ſit down with *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Jacob*, in the Kingdom of heaven; but the

the children of the Kingdom shall be cast forth into outer darkness, there shall be weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.

When the dead tree is carried out of the Orchard, the Husbandman cuts off his branches, and rives him asunder with his wedges. This also is the lot of barren Professors. *The Lord of that servant will come in a day, when he looketh not for him, and will cut him asunder*; he shall be dissected, or cut abroad, *Luke* 12. 46. 6.

Now therefore consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear (or rend) you in pieces, *Psal.* 50. 22. O direful day! when the same hand which planted, pruned, and watered thee so long, and so tenderly, shall now strike mortal strokes at thee, and that without pity: *For he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour*, Isa. 27. 11. For the day of mercy is over, and the day of his wrath is fully come.

When this tree is cleav'd abroad, then it is rotten, hollow inside appears, which was the cause of its barrenness; it looked like a Fair and sound bodied tree, but now all may see how rotten it is at the heart: So will God in that day, when he shall dissect the barren Professor, discover the rottenness of his heart, and unsoundness of his principles and ends; then they who never suspected him before, shall see what a hollow and rotten-hearted Professor he was. 7.

Lastly, The fruitless tree is cast into the fire. This also is the end and sad issue of formality, *John* 15. 6. *He is cast forth as a branch, and is withered, and men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.* This is an undoubted truth, that there is no plant in Gods vineyard, but he will have glory from it by bearing fruit, or glory in it by burning in the fire. In this fire shall they lie, *gnashing their teeth*, *Luke* 13. 28. and that both in indignation against the Saints, whom they shall see in glory, and against *Jesus Christ*, who would not save them; and against themselves, for losing so foolishly the opportunities of salvation. Do you behold when you sit by the fire, the froth that boyles out of those flaming logs? O think of that fome and rage of these un- 8.

done creatures, foaming and gnashing their teeth in that fire which is not quenched, *Mark* 9. 44.

REFLECTION.

A Reflection for a formal Hypocrite.

HOw often have I passed by such barren trees, with a more barren heart? as little thinking such a tree to be the emblem of my self, as *Nebuchadnezzar* did, when he saw that tree in a dream which represented himself, and shadowed forth to him his ensuing misery, *Dan.* 4. 13. But, Oh my conscience! my drouzy, sleepy conscience! wert thou but tender and faithful to me, thou wouldst make as round and terrible an application of such a spectacle to me as the faithful Prophet did to him, *v.* 22. And thus wouldst thou O my soul, bemoan thy condition!

Poor wretch, here I grow for a little time, among the trees of righteousness, the plants of renown; but I am none of them, I was never planted a right seed; some green and flourishing leaves of profession indeed I have, which deceive others, but God cannot be deceived; he sees I am fruitless and rotten at the heart. Poor soul, what will thine end be but burning! Behold the ax lyeth by thy root, and wonder it is, that there it should lye so long, and I yet standing! still mercy pleads for a fruitless creature; Lord, spare it one year longer. Alas! he need strike no great blow to ruine me, his very breath blows to destruction, *Job* 4. 9. a frown of his face can blast and ruine me, *Psal.* 80. 6. he is daily sollicited by his justice to hew me down, and yet I stand. Lord, cure my barrenness; I know thou hadst rather see fruit, than fire upon me.

The

The *Poem.*

IF after pains and patience, you can ſee
No hopes of fruit (1) down goes the barren tree: (1) Luk. 13.7.
You will not ſuffer trees that are unſound,
And barren too, to cumber uſeful ground.
The fatal ax is (2) laid unto the root (2) Mat. 3.10.
It's fit for fire, when unfit for fruit.
But though this be a dead, and barren tree;
Reader, I would not have it ſo to thee.
May it to thee this ſerious thought ſuggeſt,
In all the Orchard this dead tree's the beſt.
Think on it ſadly, lay it cloſe to heart;
This is the caſe in which thou waſt, or art.
If ſo thou waſt, but (3) now doſt live and grow, (3) Eph. 2. 1.
And bring forth fruit, what praiſe, and thanks doſt ow
To that wiſe Husbandman that made thee ſo! John 15. 1.
O think when juſtice lifted up its hand,
How (4) mercy did then interceding ſtand! (4) Luk. 13. 8.
How pity did on thy behalf appear,
To beg reprieval for another year.
Stop Lord, forbear him; all hope is not paſt,
He can but be for fire at the laſt.
Though many Sermons, many a gracious call
He hath reſiſted like a brazen wall.
The next (5) may win him, then thy grace ſhall raiſe (5) Rom. 2. 4.
Unto it ſelf a (6) monument of praiſe. (6) Luke 15. 7.
How ſhould this meditation thaw and melt
The heart of him that hath ſuch mercy felt.
But if thou ſtill remain a barren tree,
Then here as in a mirrour; thou may'ſt ſee
Thy wretched ſtate, when juſtice at a blow,
Requites Gods patience in thine overthrow.
And canſt thou (7) bear it? can thy heart endure (7) Pſa. 7.
To think of everlaſting burnings? ſure
This muſt thy lot, thy fearful portion be;
If thou continue ſtill a barren tree.

The Tree.

An Introduction

TO THE

Third PART

OF

HUSBANDRY

NOw from the pleaſant Orchard let us walk
A turn i'th fields, and there converſe and talk
With Cows and Horſes, they can teach us ſome
Choice Leſſons, though irrational and dumb:
My Reader's weary, yet I do not fear.
To be forſaken by one Reader here.
He'l doubtleſs ſtay to hear what queſtions I
Propound to beaſts, and how they make reply.
The fatted Ox, and pamper'd horſe you ride;
Their careleſs Maſter for his care thus chide.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

Upon the Husbandmans care for his cattel.

More care for Horse and Oxen many take
Than for their Souls, or dearest Childrens sake.

OBSERVATION.

MAny Husbandmen are excessively careful about their cattel, rising themselves early, or causing their servants to rise betimes to provender and dress them. Much time is spent in some Countreys, in trimming and adorning their Horses with curious trappings and plumes of feathers; and if at any time a beast be sick, what care is taken to recover and heal them? you will be sure they shall want nothing that is necessary for them; yea, many will chuse rather to want themselves, than suffer their Horses so to do; and take a great deal of comfort to see them thrive and prosper under their hands.

APPLICATION.

WHat one said of bloudy *Herod*, who slew so many children at *Bethlehem*, That it were better to be his swine, than his Son, may be truly enough applyed to some Parents and Masters, who take less care for the saving the souls of their children and servants, than they do for the bodies of those beasts which daily feed at their stalls and cribs. Many there be who do in reference to their souls, as *Jacob* did, with respect to the preservation of their bodies, when he put all the herds of cattle before, and his Wives and little ones behind, as he went to meet his brother *Esau*. 'Tis a weighty saying of a grave Author; *It's vile ingratitude to rejoyce when cattel multiply, and repine when children increase; it's Heathenish distrustfulness, to fear, that he who provides for your beasts,*

Jenk. on Jude part. 2. p. 170.

beasts, will not provide for your children; and it's no less than unnatural cruelty to be careful of the bodies of beasts, and careless of the souls of children. Let us but a little compare your care and diligence in both respects, and see in a few particulars, whether you do indeed value your own, or your children and servants souls, as you do the life and health of a beast.

1. Your care for your very Horses is expressed early, whilst they are but Colts, and not come to do you any service; you are willing to be at pains and cost, to have them broken and brought to their way. This is more than ever many of them did for their children; they can see them wild and profane, naturally taking a stroke or way of wickedness, but yet never were at any pains or cost to break them; these must be fondel'd and cockered up in the natural way of their own corruption and wickedness, and not a rod or reproof used to break them of it.

'Tis observed of the *Persians*, that they put out their children to School as soon as they could speak, and would not see them in seven years after, lest their indulgence should do them hurt. *Clark's Mir. p. 506.*

2. You keep your constant set times, morning and evening, to feed, water and dress your cattel, and will by no means neglect it once; but how many times have you neglected morning and evening duties in your families? yea, how many be there, whose very tables, in respect of any worship God hath there, do very little differ from the very cribs and mangers at which their horses feed? As soon as you are up in a morning, you are with your beasts before you have been with your God; how little do such differ from beasts? and happy were it, if they were no more accountable to God than their beasts are?

3. The end of your care, cost and pains about your cattle is, that they may be strong for labour, and the more serviceable to you, thus you comply with the end of their beings. But how rare a thing is it, to find these men as careful to fit their posterity to be useful and serviceable to God in their generations, which is the end of their beings? If you can make them rich, and provide good matches for them, you reckon

that you have fully diſcharged the duty of parents; if they will learn to hold the Plow, that you are willing to teach them: But when did you ſpend an hour to teach them the way of ſalvation?

Now to convince ſuch careleſs Parents of the heinouſneſs of their ſin, let theſe four Queries be ſolemnly conſidered.

Qu. 1. Whether this be a ſufficient diſcharge of that great duty which God hath laid upon Chriſtian Parents, in reference to their families? That God hath charged them with the ſouls of their families is undeniable, *Deut.*6.6,7. *Eph.*6.4. If God had not cloathed you with his authority, to command them in the way of the Lord; he would never have charged them ſo ſtrictly to yield you obedience as he hath done, *Eph.* 6.1. *Col.*3.20. Well, a great truſt is repoſed in you, look to your duty, for without diſpute you ſhall anſwer for it.

Qu. 2. Whether it be likely, if the time of youth (which is the moulding age) be neglected, they will be wrought upon to any good afterwards? Husbandmen, let me put a ſenſible caſe to you; Do not you ſee in your very horſes, that whilſt they are young, you can bring them to any way; but if once they have got a falſe ſtroke, and by long cuſtom it be grown natural to them, then there is no breaking them of it: yea, you ſee it, in your very Orchards, you may bring a tender twig to grow in what form you pleaſe; but when its grown to a ſturdy limb, there is no bending it afterwards to any other from than what it naturally took. Thus it is with children, *Prov.*22.6. *Train up a child in the way he ſhould go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.*

Qu. 3. Whether, if you neglect to inſtruct them in the way of the Lord, *Satan*, and their own natural corruptions, will not inſtruct them in the way to hell? Conſider this ye careleſs Parents; if you will not teach your children, the Devil will teach them; if you ſhew them not how to pray, he will ſhew them how to curſe and ſwear, and take the name of the Lord in vain; if you grudge time and pains about their ſouls, the Devil doth not. Oh, 'tis a ſad conſideration, that ſo many children ſhould be put to School to the devil!

Qu. 4. What comfort are you like to have from them when they are

are old, if you bring them not up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord when they are young? Many Parents have lived to reap in their old age, the fruit of their own folly and careleſsneſs, in the looſe and vain education of their children. By *Licurgus* his Law, no Parent was to be relieved by his children in age, if he gave them not good education in their youth; and it is a Law at this day among the *Switzers*, that if any child be condemned to die for a capital offence, the Parents of that child are to be his executioners; theſe Laws were made to provoke Parents to look better to their charge. Believe this as an undoubted truth; That that child which becomes (through thy default) an inſtrument to diſhonour God, ſhall prove ſooner or later, a ſon or daughter of ſorrow to thee.

REFLECTIONS.

GOd hath found out my ſin this day. This hath been my practiſe ever ſince I had a family committed to my charge; I have ſpent more time and pains about the bodies of my beaſts, than the ſouls of my children; beaſt that I am, for ſo doing; little have I conſidered the precioufneſs of my own, or their immortal ſouls. How careful have I been to provide fodder to preſerve my cattel in the Winter, whilſt I leave my own, and their ſouls to periſh to eternity, and make no proviſion for them? Surely my children will one day curſe the time that ever they were born unto ſuch a cruel father, or of ſuch a mercileſs mother. Should I bring home the plague into my family, and live to ſee all my poor children lye dead by the walls, if I had not the heart of a Tyger, ſuch a ſight would melt my heart; and yet, the death of their ſouls by the ſin which I propagated to them affects me not! Ah, that I could ſay, I had done but as much for them, as I have done for a beaſt that periſheth!

1. A Reflection for careleſs Parents.

But unhappy wretch that I am, God caſt a better lot for me, I am the off-ſpring of religious and tender Parents, who have alwayes deeply concerned themſelves in the everlaſting ſtate of my ſoul; many prayers and tears have they

2. A Reflection for the diſobedient child of a gracious Parent

poured out to God for me, both in my hearing as well as in secret; many holy and wholsom counsels have they from time to time dropt upon me; many precious examples have they set in their own practise before me; many a time when I have sinned against the Lord, have they stood over me with a rod in their hands, and tears in their eyes, using all means to reclaim me; but like an ungracious wretch I have slighted all their counsels, grieved their hearts, and imbittered their lives to them, by my sinful courses. Ah, my soul! thou art a degenerate Plant; better will it be with the off-spring of infidels, than with thee, if repentance prevent not; now I live in one family with them, but shortly I shall be separated from them, as far as hell is from heaven; they now tenderly pity my misery, but then they shall approve and applaud the righteous sentence of Christ upon me: So little priviledge shall I then have from my relation to them, that they shall be produced as witnesses against me, and all their rejected counsels, reproofs, and examples, charged home upon me, as the aggravations of my wickedness; and better it will be, when it shall come to that, that I had been brought forth by a beast, than sprang from the loyns of such Parents.

The *POEM.*

YOur cattel in fat pastures thrive and grow,
There's nothing wanting; that should make them so.
(1) Isa.1.3. The pamper'd horse commends his Masters (1) care,
(2) Gen.24. 31,32. Who neither pains, or cost, doth grudge or (2) spare.
But art not thou mean while, the veriest fool;
That pamper'st beasts, and starv'st thy precious soul?
(3) Eccl.31 21 'Twere well, if you could (3) dye, as now you live
Like beasts; and had no more account to give.
O that these lines, your folly might detect!
Who both your own, and childrens souls neglect,

To

To care for beasts. O man, prepare to hear
The doleful'st language, that e're pierc'd thine ear!
When you your children once in hell shall meet,
And with such language their damn'd parents greet,
"O cursed father, wretched mother, why
"Was I your off-spring? would to God that I
"Had sprung from Tygers, who more (4) tender be
"Unto their young, than you have been to me.
"How did you spend your thoughts, time, care and cost
"About my body? whilst my soul was (5) lost.
"Did you not know I had a soul that must
"Live, (6) when this body was resolv'd to dust?
"You could not chuse but understand if I,
"Without an interest in Christ did dye,
"It needs must (7) come to this; O how could you
"Prove so remorsless, and no pity shew!
"Oh cruel parents! I may curse the day
"That I was born of such as did betray
"Their child to endless torments. Now must I
"With, and through you, in flames for ever lye.
Let this make every parent tremble, lest
He lose his child, whilst caring for his beast.
Or lest his own poor soul do starve and pine
Whilst he takes thoughts for Horses, Sheep and kine.

(4) Nah. 2. 11. Lam. 4. 3.

(5) Mat. 16. 26

(6) Eccl. 3. 21.

(7) Mat. 16. 26

CHAP. II.

When under loads your beasts do groan, think then
How great a mercy 'tis that you are men.

Upon the hard labour and cruel usage of beasts.

OBSERVATION.

THough some men be excessively careful and tender over their beasts (as was noted in the former Chapter) yet others

others are cruel and mercileſs towards them, not regarding how they ride or burden them. How often have I ſeen them fainting under their loads? wrought off their legs, and turned out with galled backs into the fields, or high wayes, to ſhift for a little graſs? many times have I heard and pitied them, groaning under unreaſonable burdens, and beaten on by mercileſs drivers, till at laſt by ſuch cruel uſage they have been deſtroyed, and then caſt into a ditch for dogs meat!

APPLICATION.

SUch ſights as theſe ſhould make men thankful for the mercy of their Creation, and bleſs their bountiful Creator, that they were not made ſuch creatures themſelves. Some beaſts are made *ad eſum*, only for food, being no otherwiſe uſeful to man, as *ſwine*, &c. theſe are only fed for ſlaughter, we kill and eat them, and regard not their cryes and ſtruglings when the knife is thruſt to their very hearts; others are only *ad uſum*, for ſervice, whilſt living, but unprofitable when dead; as *Horſes*, theſe we make to drudge and toyl for us from day to day, but kill them not; others are both *ad eſum, & uſum*, for food when dead, and ſervice whilſt alive, as the *Ox*. Theſe we make to plow our fields, draw our carriages, and afterwards prepare them for ſlaughter.

But man was made for nobler ends, created Lord of the lower world; not to ſerve, but to be ſerved by other creatures; a mercy able to melt the hardeſt heart into thankfulneſs. I remember, *Luther* preſſing men to be thankful, that they are not brought into the loweſt condition of creatures, and to bleſs God that they can ſee any creature below themſelves, gives us a famous inſtance in the following ſtory: Two *Cardinals* (ſaith he) riding in a great deal of pomp to the Council of *Conſtance*, by the way they heard a man in the fields, weeping and wailing bitterly, they rode to him, and asked what he ailed? perceiving his eye intently fixed upon an ugly toad, he told them that his heart was melted with the conſideration of this mercy, that God had not made him ſuch

Luther in 3. *præcept.*

a

a deformed and loathsom creature, though he were formed out of the same clay with it: *Hoc est quod amare fleo*, said he, This is that, that makes me weep bitterly. Whereupon one of the *Cardinals* cryes out, Well said the Father, the unlearned will rise and take heaven, when we with all our learning shall be thrust into hell. That which melted the heart of this poor man, should melt every heart when we behold the misery to which these poor creatures are subjected. And this will appear a mercy of no slight consideration, if we but draw a comparison betwixt our selves, and these irrational creatures, in these three particulars.

Though they and we were made of the same mould and clay, yet how much better hath God dealt with us, even as to the outward man? the structure of our bodies is much more excellent. God made other creatures by a word of command, but man by counsel; it was not be Thou, but let Us make man. We might have been made stones without sence, or beasts without reason, but we were made men. The noble structure and symetry of our bodies invites our souls, not only to thankfulness, but admiration. *David* speaking of the curious frame of the body, saith, *I am wonderfully made*, *Psal.* 139. or as the vulgar reads it, painted as with a needle; like some rich piece of needle-work curiously embroydered with nerves and veins. Was any part of the common lump of clay thus fashioned? *Galen* gave *Epicurus* an hundred years time to imagine a more commodious situation, configuration, or composition of any one part of a humane body; and (as one saith) if all the Angels in heaven had studied to this day, they could not have cast the body of man into a more curious mould. 1.

How little ease or rest have they? they live not many years, and those they do is in bondage and misery, groaning under the effects of sin; but God hath provided better for us, even as to our outward condition in the world; we have the more rest, because they have so little. How many refreshments and comforts hath God provided for us, of which they are uncapable? if we be weary with labour, we can take 2.

our

our rest; but fresh or weary, they must stand to it, or sink under it from day to day.

3. What a narrow capacity hath God given to beasts! what a large capacity to man! Alas, they are only capable of a little sensitive pleasure; as you shall see sometimes, how they will frisk in a green pasture, this is all they be capable of, and this death puts an end to; but how comprehensive are our souls in their capacities? we are made in the image of God; we can look beyond present things, and are capable of the highest happiness, and that to all eternity; the soul of a beast is but a material form, which wholly depending upon, must needs dye with the body; but our souls are a divine spark or blast; and when the body dyes, it dyes not with it, but subsists even in its separated state.

REFLECTIONS.

1. A Reflection for an unthankful sinner. HOw great a sin is ingratitude to God, for such a common, but choice mercy of Creation; and provision for me in this world? There is no creature made worse by kindness, but man. There is a kind of gratitude which I may observe even in these bruit beasts; they do in their way acknowledge their benefactors; *The Ox knows his Owner, and the Ass his Masters Crib.* How ready are they to serve such as feed and cherish them? but I have been Both unthankful and unserviceable to my Creator and Benefactor, that hath done me good all my dayes; those poor creatures that sweat and groan under the loads that I lay upon them, never sinned against God, nor transgressed the Laws of their Creation as I have done; and yet God hath dealt better with me than with them. Oh that the bounty of God, and his distinguishing mercy between me and the beasts that perish, might move and melt my heart into thankfulness! O that I might consider seriously what the higher and more excellent end of my Creation is, and might more endeavour to answer and live up to it! Or else (O my soul) it will be worse with thee than with the beasts. 'Tis true, they are under bondage and misery; but it is but for a little time, death will end all their

their pains, and eaſe them of all their heavy loads; but I ſhall groan to all eternity, under a heavier burden than ever they felt; they have no account to give but ſo have I. What comfort is it that I have a larger capacity than a beaſt hath? that God hath endowed me with reaſon which is denyed to them? Alas! this will but augment my miſery, and enlarge me to take in a greater meaſure of anguiſh.

2. A Reflection for an elect ſoul.

But how many ſteps (O my ſoul) mayeſt thou aſcend in the praiſes of thy God, when thou conſidereſt the mercies that God hath beſtowed upon thee! not only in that he made thee, not a ſtone or tree without ſenſe, or an horſe, or dog without reaſon; but that thou art not an infidel without light, or an unregenerate perſon without grace. What! to have ſenſe, and all the delights of it, which ſtones have not; reaſon, with the more high and noble pleaſures of it, which beaſts have not; the light and knowledge of the great things of the Goſpel, which the Heathens have not; and ſuch an expectation and hope of unconceivable glory and felicity, which the unſanctified have not. O my ſoul! how rich! how bountiful hath thy God been to thee! theſe are the overflowings of his love to thee, who waſt moulded out of the ſame lump with the *beaſts*, that *groan* on earth, yea with the *damned* that *howl* in hell; well may I ſay, that God hath been a good God to me.

The *Poem.*

WHen I behold a tyred Jade put on
With whip and ſpur; till all his ſtrength be gone.
See ſtreams of ſweat run down his bleeding ſides,
How little mercy's ſhewn by him that rides.
If I more thankleſs to my God don't prove,
Than ſuch a Rider's mercileſs, 'twill move
My ſoul to praiſe; for who ſees this, and can
But bleſs the Lord, that he was made a man.

And ſuch a ſight the Rider ought to move,
This Meditation duly to improve.
What hath this creature done, that he ſhould be
Thus beaten, wounded, and tyr'd out by me?
He is my fellow-creature, 'tis meer grace;
I had not been in his, he in my caſe.
Ungrateful, ſtupid man; God might have made
Me bear the ſaddle, as I ſee this Jade.
He never ſin'd, but for my ſin doth lye
Subjected unto all this miſery.
Lord, make my heart relent; that I ſhould be
To thee more uſeleſs, than my horſe to me.
He did his utmoſt, went as long as ever
His legs could bear him: but for me, I never
Thus ſpent my ſtrength for God; but oft have bin
Too prodigal thereof, in wayes of ſin;
Though he's the horſe and I the man; 'twill be
Far better with my horſe, one day than me:
Unleſs thy grace prevent, and ſuper-add
A new Creation; unto that I had.
Could ev'ry Rider fix a ſerious thought
On ſuch a ſubject, and hereby be taught
To ſpiritualize it, and improve it thus;
How ſweet, would tedious journeys be to us!
But ſuch a task, a graceleſs heart dogs out
More than the tyred horſe, I write about.

CHAP. III.

Upon the ſeeking of loſt Cattel.

When ſeeking your loſt Cattel, keep in mind
That thus Chriſt Jeſus ſeeks, your ſouls to find.

OBSERVATION.

WHen Cattel are ſtrayed away from your fields, you uſe all care and diligence to recover them again, tracing

tracing their footsteps, crying them in Market-Town, sending your servants abroad, and inquiring your selves of all that you think can give news of them. What care and pains men will take in such cases, was exemplified in *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* 9.4,5. who with his servant passed through *Mount Ephraim*, to seek the Asses that were strayed from his father, and through the Land of *Shalisha*, and through the Land of *Shalim*, and they were not there, and through the Land of the *Benjamites*, but found them not.

APPLICATION.

THe care and pains you take to recover your lost cattel, carries a sweet and lively representation of the love of *Jesus Christ*, in the recovery of lost sinners. *Jesus Christ* came on purpose from heaven upon a like errand, to seek and to save that which was lost, *Mat.* 18.11. There are several particulars in which this glorious design of Christ, in seeking and saving lost man, and the care and pains of Husbandmen in recovering their lost cattel, do meet and touch, though there be as many particulars also in which they differ; all which I shall open under the following heads.

We sometimes find that cattel will break out of those very fields where they have been bred, and where they want no thing, that is needful for them. Just thus, lost man departed from his God, brake out of that pleasant enclosure where he was abundantly provided for, both as to soul and body; yet then he brake over the hedge of the command, and went astray, *Eccles.* 7.29. *Lo this only have I found, that God made man upright, but he sought out to himself many inventions.* He was not content and satisfied with that blessed state God had put him into, but would be trying new conclusions to the loss and ruin, both of himself and his posterity. 1.

Strayers are evermore sufferers for it; all they get by it, is to be pinned and pounded; and what did man get by departing from his God, but ruin and misery to soul and body? Will you have an abreviate of his sufferings and losses? (the full account none can give you) why, by straying from his 2.

God, he lost the rectitude and holiness of his nature; (like a true strayer) he is all dirty and miry, overspread and besmeared both in soul and body, with the odious filthiness of sin; he lost the liberty and freedom of his will to good; a precious jewel of estimable value: This is a real misery incurr'd by the fall, though some have so far lost their understandings and humility, as not to own it; he hath lost his God, his soul, his happiness, and his very bowels of compassion towards himself in this miserable state.

3. When your cattel are strayed, yea, though it be but one of the Flock or Herd, you leave all the rest, and go after that which is lost: So did *Jesus Christ*, who in the fore-cited place, *Mat.* 18.12. compares himself to such a Shepherd; he left heaven it self, and all the blessed *Angels* there, to come into this world to seek lost man. O the precious esteem, and dear love that Christ had to poor man! How did his bowels yearn towards us in our lost state! How did he pity us in our misery! As if he had said, Poor creatures, they have lost themselves, and are become a prey to the devil, in a perishing state; I will seek after them, and save them. The Son of man is come to seek and to save.

4. You are glad when you have found your strayers; much more is Christ, when he hath found a lost soul. O 'tis a great satisfaction to him to see the fruit of the travel of his soul, Isa. 53. *Yea, there is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, than ninety nine just persons that need no repentance.* What demonstrations of joy and gladness did the father of the Prodigal give, when he had found his Son that was lost, *Luke* 15.20.

5. When you have brought home your strayers, you sometimes clog them, to prevent their wandring again, and stop up the gaps with thorns; and so doth God oftentimes by such souls as are recovered and brought home to Christ; he hangs a clog of affliction to prevent their departure from God again, 2 *Cor.* 12.7.

But then there are five particulars in which Christ seeking lost souls, and your seeking lost cattel differ.

1. Your cattel sometimes find the way home themselves, and re-

return to you of their own accord; but loſt man never did, nor can do ſo; he was his own deſtroyer, but can never be his own Saviour; it was poſſible for him not to have loſt his God, but having once loſt him, can never find him again of himſelf. Alas! his heart is bent to backſliding, he hath no will to return. Hear how Chriſt complains, *Joh.* 5. 40. *Ye will not come unto me.* Mans recovery begins in God, not in himſelf.

2. Your ſervants can find, and bring back your loſt cattel as well as you; but ſo cannot Chriſt's ſervants. Miniſters may *diſcover*, but cannot *recover* them; they daily *ſee*, but cannot *ſave* them; *lament* them they can, but *help* them they cannot; *intreat* and beg them to return they can and do, but *prevail* with them they cannot. *Melancthon* thought when he began to preach, to perſwade all; but old *Adam* was too hard for young *Melancthon*.

3. You ſeek all the cattel that are ſtrayed from you, eſpecially the beſt; but *Jeſus Chriſt* only, ſeeks poor loſt man. There were other creatures, and ſuch as by nature were more excellent, that loſt their God and themſelves; I mean, the *Apoſtate Angels*; but he came not to ſeek them: Herein his ſingular love to man appears.

4. When you have recovered and brought home your loſt cattel, you may loſe them the ſecond time, and never recover them again: but ſo cannot Chriſt. Man once recovered, is for ever ſecured by him. *All that thou haſt given me I have kept, and not one of them is loſt, but the ſon of perdition*; and he was never ſavingly found, *Joh.* 17. 12.

5. Though you prize your cattel, yet you will not venture your life for the recovery of them; rather let them go than regain them with ſuch an hazard; but *Jeſus Chriſt* not only ventured, but actually laid down his life to recover, and ſave loſt man: He redeemed them at the price of his own blood; he is that good Shepherd that laid down his life for the Sheep. O the ſurpaſſing love of Chriſt to loſt ſouls!

RE-

REFLECTIONS.

1. A Reflection for a lost soul.

LOrd, I am a lost creature, an undone soul; and herein lyes my misery, that I have not only lost my God, but have no heart to return to him! Nay, I fly from Christ, who is come on purpose from heaven to seek and to save me; his Messengers are abroad seeking for such as I am, but I avoid them, or at least refuse to obey their call and perswasions to return. Ah, what a miserable state am I in! every step I go is a step towards hell; my soul, with the Prodigal is ready to perish in a strange Countrey! but I have no mind with him to return home; wretched soul, what will the end of this be? If God have lost thee, the Devil hath found thee; he takes up all strayers for God: yea, death, and hell will shortly find thee, if *Christ* do not; and then thy recovery (O my soul!) will be impossible; Why sit I here perishing and dying! I am not yet as irrecoverably lost as the damned are. O let me delay no longer, lest I be lost for ever!

2. A Reflection for one that was lost, but is found.

O my soul! for ever bless and admire the love of *Jesus Christ*, who came from heaven to seek and save, such a lost soul as I was. Lord, how marvellous, how matchless is thy love! I was lost, and am found. I am found, and did not seek; nay, I am found by him from whom I fled. Thy love, O my Saviour! was a preventing love, a wonderful love; thou lovedst me much more than I loved my self; I was cruel to my own soul, but thou wast kind; thou soughtest for me, a lost sinner, and not for lost *Angels*; thy hand of grace caught hold of me, and hath let go thousands, and ten thousands, as good as my self by nature. Like another *David*, thou didst rescue my poor lost soul out of the mouth of the destroyer; yea, more than so, thou didst lose thine own life to find mine: And now, dear *Jesu*, since I am thus marvellously recovered, shall I ever straggle again from thee? O, let it for ever be a warning to me, how I turn aside into by-paths of sin any more!

The

The *Poem.*

WHen cattel from your fields are gone astray,
and you to seek them through the Country ride; 1 Sam. 9. 4, 5.
Enquiring for them all along the way;
tracking their foot-steps, where they turn'd aside.

One servant this way sent, another that;
searching the fields, and countrey round about:
This meditation now falls in so pat;
as if God sent it to enquire you out.

My beasts are lost, and so am (1) I by sin; (1) Luk. 15. 32.
my wretched soul from God thus wandring went,
As I seek them, so was (2) I sought by him (2) Mat. 18. 11
Who from the (3) fathers bosom forth was sent. (3) John 1. 18.

Pursu'd by Sermons, follow'd close by grace;
and strong convictions Christ hath sought for me,
Yea though I (4) shun him still he gives me chase, (4) John 5. 40
as if resolv'd I should not damned be.

When (5) Angels lost themselves it was not so, (5) Heb. 2. 16.
God did not seek, or once for them enquire;
But said, let these Apostate creatures go,
Il'e plague them for it (6) with eternal fire. (6) Jude 6.

Lord, what am (7) I, that thou shouldst set thine eyes (7) 1 Cor. 1. 27
and still seek after such a wretch as I?
Whose matchless mercy, and rich grace (8) despise, (8) Psa. 68. 18.
as if in spight thereof resolv'd to die.

Why should I shun thee, blessed Saviour, why
should I avoid thee thus? thou dost not chase
My soul to (9) slay it; O that ever I
should fly a Saviour that's so full of grace! (9) Luk. 9. 56.

Long

Long hast thou sought me, Lord, I now return;
O let thy bowels of compassion sound,
For my departure, I sincerely mourn;
and let this day, thy wandring sheep be found.

CHAP. IV.

Upon the feeding of fat Cattel.

Fat beasts you kill, the lean you use to save
God's dispensations, some such meaning have.

OBSERVATION.

IT is a good Observation of a Father, and well applyed; *Vituli triturantes quotidie ligantur, vituli mactandi quotidie in pascuis libere relinquntur.* Oxen for use are daily yoaked and kept short, whilst those that are designed for the shambles, are let loose in green pastures, to feed at pleasure. Store beasts fare hard, and are kept lean and low; feeding beasts are excused from the yoak, whilst others are laboured and wrought hard every day; the one hath more than he can eat, the other would eat more if he had it.

APPLICATION.

THus deals the Lord oft-times with his own elect, whom he designs for glory; and with the wicked, who are preparing for the day of wrath. Thus are they filled with earthly prosperity, and creature-enjoyments, like resty and wanton beasts turned out at liberty in a fat pasture, whilst poor Saints are kept hard and short, *Amos* 1. 4. *Hear this word ye kine of* Bashan, *that are in the mountains of* Samaria, *which oppress the poor, and crush the needy.* These metaphorical kine are the prosperous oppressors of the world, full fed, and wanton wicked men. 'Tis true, heaven hath not all the poor, not

nor hell all the rich; but it's a very common dispensation of providence, to bestow most of the things of this world upon them that have no portion in heaven; and to keep them short on earth, for whom that kingdom is provided. Let me draw forth the similitude in a few particulars.

The beasts of slaughter have the fattest pastures; so have the ungodly in the world; *Their eyes stand out with fatness, they have more than heart could wish*, Psal. 73. 7. their hearts are as fat as *grease*, Psal. 119. 70. These be they that fleet off the cream of earthly enjoyments, *whose bellies are filled with hidden treasures*, Psal. 17. 14. *The earth is given into the hand of the wicked*, Job 9. 24. O, what full estates? what an affluence of earthly delights hath God cast in upon some wicked men? there is much *wantonness*, but no *want* in their dwellings? Some that now know not which way to turn themselves in hell, once knew not where to bestow their goods on earth. 1.

Feeding beasts grow wanton in their full pastures; there you shall see them tumble and frisk; and kick up their heels. The same effect hath the prosperity of the wicked, it makes them wanton; their life is but a diversion from one pleasure to another, *Job* 21. 11, 12, 13. *They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance; they take the timbrel, and harp, and rejoyce at the sound of the Organ; they spend their dayes in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave.* The same character doth the Prophet *Amos* give of them, *Amos* 6. 4, 5, 6. *They stretch themselves upon beds of Ivory, drink Wine in bowls*, &c. and no sorrow goes to their hearts. These are they that live in pleasures upon earth, as a fish in the water, *Jam.* 5. 5. 2.

These fat pastures do but the sooner hasten the death of these cattel; the sooner they are fatted, the sooner they are slaughtered; and the prosperity of the wicked serves to the same end. The prosperity of fools shall destroy them (*i.e.*) it shall be the means and instrument of heating and heightning their lusts, and thereby fitting them for destruction; their prosperity is food and fewel to their corruptions. Many wicked men had not been so soon ripe for hell, had they not grown in the Sun-shine of prosperity. 3.

4. Fatted beasts do not in the least understand the intent and meaning of the Husbandman, in allowing them such large and fat pastures, which he denyes to his other cattel; and as little as beasts, do wicked men understand the scope and end of Gods providences, in casting prosperity and wealth upon them; little do they think their tables are a snare, a gin, and a trap for their souls; they only (like beasts) mind what is before them, but do not at all understand the tendency and end of these their sensual delights.

5. Though the Husbandman keep his store cattel in short commons, yet he intends to preserve them; these shall remain with him, when the others are driven to the slaughter.

Such a design of preservation is carried on in all those outward straits, wants and hardships which the Lord exposes his people to. I confess, such dispensations, for present, are very stumbling and puzling things, even to gracious and wise persons. To see wicked men, not only exempted from their troubles, but even oppressed with prosperity; to see a godly man in wants and straits, and a wicked man have more than his heart can wish, is a case that poses the wisest Christian, till he consider the designs and issues of both those providences, and then he acquiesces in the wisdom of God so ordering it, *Psal.* 73.5,14,18,23.

REFLECTIONS.

1. A Reflection for a voluptuous worldling.

DOth my prosperity fat me up for hell, and prepare me for the day of slaughter? little cause have I then to glory in it, and lift up my heart upon these things. Indeed, God hath given, (I cannot say blessed me with) a fulness of creature-enjoyments; upon these my carnal heart seizeth greedily and securely, not at all suspecting a snare lying in these things, for the ruin of my soul. What are all these charming pleasures, but so many rattles to quiet my soul, whilst its damnation steals insensibly upon it? What are all my businesses and imployments in the world, but so many diversions from the business of life? There are but two differences betwixt me, and the pooreſt slave the devil hath on earth;

earth; such are whipt on to hell by outward miseries, and I am coached to hell in a little more pomp and honour; these will have a less, and I a greater account in the day of reckoning. O that I had never known prosperity! I am now tumbling in a green pasture, and shortly shall be hanging up in the shambles in hell; if this be the best fruit of my prosperity, if I were taken captive by cruel *Canibals*, and fed with the richest fare, but withal understood, that the design of it were, to fat me up like a beast for them to feed upon; how little stomack should I have to their dainties? O my soul! it were much better for thee to have a sanctified poverty, which is the portion of many Saints, than an ensnaring prosperity, set as a trap to ruin thee for ever.

2. A Reflection for a poor Christian.

The wisdom of my God hath allotted me but short commons here, his providence feeds me, but from hand to mouth; but I am (and well may be) contented with my present state; that which sweetens it, is, that I am one of the Lords preserved. How much better is a morsel of bread, and a draught of water here, with an expectancy of glory hereafter, than a fat pasture given in, and fitting for the wrath to come? Well, since the case stands thus, blessed be God for my present lot; though I have but little in hand, I have much in hope; my present troubles will serve to sweeten my future joyes; and the sorrows of this life will give a lustre to the glory of the next; that which is now hard to suffer, will then be sweet to remember; my songs then, will be louder than my groans now.

The *POEM.*

THose beasts which for the shambles are design'd,
In fragant, flowery Meadows you shall find;
Where they abound with rich and plenteous fare;
Whilst others graze in commons thin and bare,

Thoſe live a ſhort and pleaſant life; but theſe
Protract their lives, in dry, and ſhorter leas.
(1) Job 21.13. Thus live the wicked, (1) thus they do abound,
With earthly glory, and with honour crown'd.
Their lofty heads unto the ſtars aſpire,
And radient beams, their ſhining brows attire.
(2) Job 21.13. The (2) fatteſt portion's ſerv'd up in their diſh,
(3) ibid. Yea, (3) they have more than their own hearts can wiſh.
Diſſolv'd in (4) pleaſures, crown'd with buds of *May*;
(4) Jam.4 5. They for a time, in theſe fat paſtures play;
Friſk, dance and leap, like full fed beaſts; and even
(5) Pſa. 73.9. Turn up their (5) wanton heels againſt the heaven.
Not underſtanding that this pleaſant life,
Serves but to fit them for the Butchers knife.
In fragrant Meads, they tumbling are to day,
(6) Job 21.13. To morrow to the (6) ſlaughter led away.
Their pleaſure's gone, and vaniſh'd like a bubble
Which makes their future torments on them (7) double.
(7) Rev.18.7 Mean while, Gods little flock is (8) poor and lean;
(8) Jam.2.5. Becauſe the Lord did ne're intend, or mean
This for their portion: and beſides doth know
(9) ibid. Their ſouls (9) prove beſt, where ſhorteſt graſs doth grow.
Cheer up poor flock, although your fare be thin;
Yet here is ſomething to take comfort in:
You here ſecurely feed, and need not fear
Th' infernal Butcher can't approach you here.
'Tis ſomewhat that, but O, which far tranſcends!
Your glorious Shepherd's coming; who intends
To lead you hence, unto that fragant hill
(1) Pſa.17.15. Wherewith green paſtures he his flocks will (1) fill.
On which he from celeſtial caſements pours
The ſweeteſt dews, and conſtant gracious ſhowres.
Along whoſe banks, rivers of pleaſures ſlide
There his bleſs'd flocks, for ever ſhall abide.
O envy not the worldlings preſent joyes
Which to your future mercies are but toyes.
Their paſture now is green, your's dry, and burn'd:
(2) Iſa.65.13, 14 But then the (2) Scene is chang'd, the tables turn'd.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Good Husbands labour for posterity,
To after after ages; Saints must have an eye.

Upon the Husbandmans care for posterity.

OBSERVATION.

PRovident and careful Husbandmen do not only labour to supply their own necessities while living, but to lay up something for their posterity when they are gone; they do not only leave to their children what their progenitors left them, but they desire to leave it improved and bettered. None but bad husbands and spend-thrifts are of the mind with that *Heathen Emperor Tiberius*, who having put all into such confusions in the *Empire*, that it might be thought the world would end with him; yet pleased himself with this apprehension, That he should be out of the reach of it; and would often say, when I am dead, let heaven and earth mingle; if the world will but hold my time, let it break when I am gone: But provident men look beyond their own time, and do very much concern themselves in the good or evil of their posterity.

APPLICATION.

WHat careful Husbands do, with respect to the provisions they make for their children, that all prudent Christians are bound to do, with respect to the truths committed to them, and by them, to be transmitted to succeeding Saints.

In the first ages of the world, even till the Law was given, faithful men were instead of books and records; they did by oral tradition convey the truths of God to posterity; but since the sacred truth hath been consigned to writing, no such tradition

tion (except full conſentient with that written word) is to be received as authentick; but the truths therein delivered to the Saints, are by verbal declarations, open confeſſions, and conſtant ſufferings, to be preſerved and delivered from age to age. This was the conſtant care of the whole cloud of witneſſes, both ancient and modern, who have kept the word of Gods patience, and would not accept their own lives, liberties or eſtates; no, nor the whole world in exchange, for that invaluable treaſure of truth; they have carefully practiſed *Solomons* counſel, *Prov.* 23.23. *Buy the truth, but ſell it not*; they would not alienate that fair inheritance, for all the inheritances on earth. Upon the ſame reaſons, that you refuſe to part with, or imbezel your eſtates, Chriſtians alſo refuſe to part with the truths of God.

1. You will not waſte or alienate your inheritance, becauſe it's precious and of great value in your eyes; but much more precious, are Gods truths to his people. *Luther* profeſſed, he would not take the whole world for one leaf of the Bible. Though ſome prophane perſons may ſay with *Pilate*, what is truth? yet know, that any one truth of the Goſpel, is more worth than all the inheritances upon earth; they are the great things of Gods Law, and he that ſells them for the greateſt things in this world, makes a ſoul-undoing bargain.

2. You will not waſte or part with your inheritance, becauſe you know your poſterity will be much wronged by it. They that baffle or drink away an eſtate, drink the tears of their ſad widows, and the very blood of their impoveriſhed children. The people of God do alſo conſider, how much the generations to come are concern'd in the conſervation of the truths of God for them; it cuts them to the heart, but to think, that their children ſhould be brought up to worſhip dumb idols, and fall down before a wooden or a breaden God. The very birds and beaſts will expoſe their own bodies to apparent danger of death, to preſerve their young. Religion doth much more intender the hearts and bowels, than nature doth.

3. You reckon it a foul diſgrace to ſell your eſtates, and become Bankrupts; 'tis a word that hears ill among you: And a Chriſtian

a Christian accounts it the highest reproach in the world, to be a traitor to, or an *Apostate* from the truths of God. When the primitive Saints were strictly required to deliver up their Bibles, those that did so, were justly branded and husht out of their company, under the odious title of *Traditores*, or deliverers.

4. You are so loath to part with your estates, because you know it's hard recovering an estate again, when once you have lost it. Christians do also know, how difficult it will be for the people of God in times to come, to recover the light of the Gospel again, if once it be extinguished. There is no truth of God recovered out of *Antichrists* hands, without great wrestlings, and much blood. The Church may call every point of reformed doctrine and discipline so recovered, her *Napthalies*; for with great wrestlings, she hath wrestled for them. *Earnestly contending for the faith, once delivered to them*, Jude 3.

5. To conclude, rather than you will part with your estates, you will chuse to suffer many wants and hardships all your lives; you will fare hard, and go bare, to preserve what you have for your posterity: But the people of God have put themselves upon far greater hardships than these, to preserve truth; they have chosen to suffer reproaches, poverty, prisons, death, and the most cruel torments, rather than the loss of Gods truth. All the *Martyrologies* will inform you, what their sufferings have been, to keep the word of Gods patience; they have boldly told their enemies, that they might pluck their hearts out of their bodies, but should never pluck the truth out of their hearts.

REFLECTIONS.

1. A Reflection for cowardly and faint-hearted Professors.

BAse unbelieving heart! how have I flinched and shrunk from truth when it hath been in danger? I have rather chosen to leave it, than my life, liberty or estate, as a prey to the enemy. I have left truth, and just it is, that the God of truth should leave me. Cowardly soul, that durst not make a stand for truth! yea, rather bold and daring soul, that

that would ſt rather venture to look a wrathful God, than an angry man in the face. I would not own and preſerve the truth, and the God of truth will not own me, 2 *Tim.* 2. 12. *If we deny him, he will deny us.*

2. A Reflection for ſuch as ſuffer for truth.

Lord! unto me haſt thou committed the precious treaſure and truſt of truth; and as I received it, ſo do I deſire to deliver it to the generations to come, that the people which are yet unborn, may praiſe the Lord. God forbid I ſhould ever part with ſuch a fair inheritance, and thereby begger my own, and thouſands of ſouls! Thou haſt given me thy truth, and the world hates me, I well know that is the ground of the quarrel; would I but throw truth over the walls, how ſoon would a retreat be ſounded to all perſecutors? But, Lord! thy truth is invaluably precious; what a vile thing is my blood, compared with the leaſt of all thy truths? Thou haſt charged me not to ſell it, and in thy ſtrength I reſolve never to lift a fine, and cut off that golden line, whereby thy truths are entailed upon thy people, from generation to generation: My friends may go, my liberty go, my blood may go; but as for thee, precious truth, thou ſhalt never go.

3. A Reflection for ſuch as are in quiet poſſeſſion of truth.

How dear hath this inheritance of truth coſt ſome Chriſtians? how little hath it coſt us? We are entred into their labours; we reap in peace, what they ſowed in tears; yea, in blood. O the grievous ſufferings that they choſe to endure! rather than to deprive us of ſuch an inheritance, thoſe noble ſouls, heated with the love of Chriſt, and care for our ſouls, made many bold and brave adventures for it; and yet, at what a low rate do we value, what coſt them ſo dear? like young heirs, that never knew the getting of an eſtate, we ſpend it freely. Lord, help us thankfully and diligently to improve thy truths, while we are in quiet poſſeſſion of them. Such intervals of peace and reſt, are uſually of no long continuance with thy people.

The

The *Poem.*

A Publick ſpirit ſcorns to plant no root
But ſuch from which himſelf may gather fruit.
For thus he reaſons, if I reap the gains
Of my laborious predeceſſors pains;
How equal is it, that poſterity
Should reap the fruits of preſent induſtry?
Should every age but ſerve its turn, and take
No thought for future times? it ſoon would make
A Bankrupt world, and ſo entail a curſe
From age to age, as it grows worſe and worſe.
Our Chriſtian predeceſſors careful thus
Have been (1) to leave an heritage to us,
Chriſts precious truths (2) conſerved in their blood, (1) Rev. 3.10.
For no leſs price thoſe truths our fathers ſtood. (2) Rev. 11.11
They have tranſmitted, would not (3) alienate (3) Heb. 12.17
From us their children ſuch a fair eſtate.
We eat what they did ſet, and ſhall truth fail
In our dayes? ſhall we cut of th'entail?
Or end the line of honour? nay, what's worſe
Give future ages cauſe to hate, and curſe
Our memories? like *Naboth*, may this age 1 King. 21.2.
Part with their blood, ſooner than heritage.
Let pity move us, let us think upon (4) Pſa. 102.18
Our (4) childrens ſouls; when we are dead, and gone.
Shall they poor ſouls, in darkneſs grope, when we
Put out the light, by which they elſe might ſee
The way to glory? yea, what's worſe? ſhall it
Be ſaid in time to come (5) Chriſt did commit (5) Jude 3.
A precious treaſure, purchas'd by his blood;
To us, for ours; and for our childrens good?
But we like cowards, falſe, perfidious men;
For carnal eaſe, loſt it, our ſelves, and them.
O let us leave to after ages more,
Than we receiv'd from all that went before.
That thoſe to come may bleſs the Lord, and keep
Our names alive, when we in duſt ſhall ſleep

CHAP. VI.

Upon the Husbandmans care to prove and preserve his Deeds.

Deeds for your Lands you prove, and keep with care;
O that for heaven you but as careful were.

OBSERVATION.

WE generally find, men are not more careful in trying gold, or in keeping it, than they are in examining their Deeds, and preserving them; these are virtually their whole estate, and therefore it concerns them to be careful of them: If they suspect a flaw in their Lease or Deed, they repair to the ablest Counsel, submit it to his judgment, make the worst of their cause, and query about all the supposeable dangers with him; if he tell them their case is suspicious and hazardous, how much are they perplexed and troubled? they can neither eat, drink, or sleep in peace, till they have a good settlement; and willing they are to be at much cost and pains to obtain it.

APPLICATION.

THese cares and fears, with which you are perplexed in such cases, may give you a little glimpse of those troubles of soul, with which the people of God are perplexed about their eternal condition, which perhaps you have been hitherto unacquainted with, and therefore slighted them, as phansies and whimsies. I say, your own fears and troubles, if ever you were ingaged by a cunning and powerful adversary in a Law-suit for your estate, may give you a little glimpse of spiritual troubles; and indeed it is no more but a glimpse of it: For, as the loss of an earthly (though fair) inheritance, is but a trifle to the loss of God, and the soul to eternity; so you cannot but imagine, that the cares, fears, and solicitudes

solicitudes of souls about these things, are much, very much beyond yours. Let us compare the cases, and see how they answer to each other.

You have evidences for your estates, and by them you hold what you have in the world. They also have evidences for their estate in Christ, and glory to come; they hold all *in capite*, by vertue of their intermarriage with Jesus Christ; they come to be enstated in that glorious inheritance, contained in the Covenant of grace. You have their tenure in that Scripture, 1 *Cor.* 3. 22, 23. All is yours, for ye are Christs, and Christ is Gods. Faith unites them to him; and after they believe, they are sealed by the Spirit of promise, *Eph.* 1. 13. They can lay claim to no promise upon any other ground; this is their title to all that they own as theirs. 1.

It often falls out, that after the sealing and executing of your Deeds or Leases, an adversary finds some dubious clause in them, and thereupon commences a Suit of Law with you. Thus it frequently falls out with the people of God, who after their believing and sealing time, have doubts and scruples raised in them about their title. Nothing is more common, than for the devil and their own unbelief to start controversies, and raise strong objections against their interest in Christ, and the Covennat of promises. These are cunning and potent adversaries, and do maintain long debates with the gracious soul, and reason so cunningly and sophistically with it, that it can by no means extricate and satisfie it self; alwayes alledging, that their title is worth nothing, which they poor souls are but too apt to suspect. 2.

All the while that a Suit in Law is depending about your title, you have but little comfort or benefit from your estate; you cannot look upon it as your own, nor lay out moneys in building or dressing, for fear you should lose all at last. Just thus stands the case with doubting Christians, they have little comfort from the most comfortable promises, little benefit from the sweetest duties and Ordinances; they put off their own comforts, and say, If we were sure, that all this were ours, we could then rejoyce in them: But alas! our title is dubious, Christ is a precious Christ, the promises are comfortable 3.

fortable things, but what if they be none of ours? Ah! how little doth the doubting Christian make of his large and rich inheritance?

4. You dare not trust your own judgments in such cases, but state your case to such as are learned in the Laws; and are willing to get the ablest Counsel you can to advise you: So are poor doubting Christians, they carry their Cases from Christian to Christian, and from Minister to Minister, with such requests as these; Pray tell me, what do you think of my condition? deal plainly and faithfully with me; these be my grounds of doubting, and these my grounds of hope. O hide nothing from me! And if they all agree that their case is good, yet they cannot be satisfied till God say so too, and confirm the word of his servants; and therefore they carry the case often before him, in such words as those, *Psal.* 139.23,24. *Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any way of wickedness in me.*

5. You have little quiet in your spirits, till the Case be resolved, your meat and drink doth you little good; you cannot sleep in the night, because these troubled thoughts are ever returning upon you: What if I shonld be turn'd out of all at last? So it is with gracious souls, their eyes are held waking in the night, by reason of the troubles of their hearts, *Psal.*77.4. Such fears as these are frequently returning upon their hearts. What if I should be found a self-deceiver at last? What if I do but hug a phantasm instead of Christ? how can this, or that, consist with grace? Their meat and drink doth them little good; their bodies are often macerated, by the troubles of their souls.

6. You will not make the best of your condition, when you state your Case to a faithful Counsellor; neither will they, but oft-times (poor pensive souls) they make it much worse than indeed it is; charge themselves with that which God never charged them with, though this be neither their wisdom, nor their duty; but the fears of miscarrying make them suspect fraud, in all they do or have.

7. Lastly, when your title is cleared, your hearts are eased; yea,

yea, not only eased, but overjoyed; though not in that degree, nor with the same kind of joy, that the hearts of Christians are overflowed, when the Lord speaks peace to their souls. O welcome the sweet morning light, after a tedious night of darkness; now they can eat their bread with comfort, and drink their wine (yea if it be but water) with a merry heart, *Eccles.* 9. 7.

REFLECTIONS.

1. The careless souls Reflection.

O How hath my spirit been tossed and hurried, when I have met with troubles and clamours about my estate! but as for spiritual troubles, and those soul-perplexing cases, that Christians speak of, I understand but little of them. I never called my everlasting state in question, nor brake an hours sleep upon any such account. Ah, my supine and careless soul! little hast thou regarded how matters stand, in reference to eternity! I have strongly conceited, but never througly examined, the validity of my title to Christ and his promises; nor am I able to tell, if my own conscience should demand, whereupon my claim is grounded!

O my soul! why art thou so unwilling to examine how matters stand betwixt God and thee? art thou afraid to look into thy condition? least by *finding* thine *hypocrisie*, thou shouldest *lose* thy *peace*; or rather thy security. To what purpose will it be to shut thine eyes against the light of conviction, unless thou couldst also find out a way to prevent thy *condemnation*? Thou seest other souls, how attentively they wait under the word, for any thing that may speak to their conditions. Doubtless thou hast heard, how frequently and seriously they have stated their conditions, and opened their cases to the Ministers of Christ. But thou, O my soul! hast no such cases to put, no doubts to be resolved; thou wilt leave all to the decision of the great day, and not trouble thy self about it now. Well, God will decide it, but little to thy comfort.

2. The doubting souls Reflection.

I have heard how some have been perplexed by litigious adversaries, but I believe none have been so tossed with fears,

fears, and distracted with doubts, as I have been about the state of my soul. Lord, what shall I do? I have often carried my doubts and scruples to thine Ordinances, waiting for satisfaction to be spoken there. I have carried them to those I have judged skilful and faithful, begging their resolution and help, but nothing will stick. Still my fears are daily renewed. O my God, do thou decide my case! tell me how the state stands betwixt thee and me; my dayes consume in trouble, I can neither do, or enjoy any good, whilst things are thus with me; all my earthly enjoyments are dry and uncomfortable things; yea, which is much worse, all my duties and thine Ordinances prove so too, by reason of the troubles of my heart! I am no ornament to my profession, nay, I am a discouragement and stumbling-block to others? I will hearken and hear what God the Lord will speak, O that it might be peace! if thou do not speak it none can; and when thou doest, keep thy servant from returning again to folly, lest I make fresh work for an accusing conscience, and give new matter to the adversary of my soul!

3. The assured Christians Reflection.

But thou (my soul) enjoyest a double mercy from thy bountiful God, who hath not only given thee a sound title, but also the clear evidence and knowledge thereof. I am gathering, and daily feeding upon the full ripe fruits of assurance, which grow upon the top boughs of faith, whilst many of my poor brethren drink their own tears, and have their teeth broken with gravel stones. Lord, thou hast set my soul upon her high places, but let me not exalt my self, because thou hast exalted me; nor grow wanton because I walk at liberty, lest for the abuse of such precious liberty, thou clap my old chains upon me, and shut up my soul again in prison.

The *POEM.*

MEn can't be quiet till they be assur'd
That their estate is good, and well secur'd.
To able Counsel they their Deed submit
Intreating them with care t'examine it

Fearing

Fearing some clause an enemy may wrest,
Or find a flaw; whereby he may devest
Them, and their children. O who can but see
How wise men in their generation be! Luk.16.8.
But do they (1) equal cares and fears express (1) Act.18.17.
About their everlasting happiness?
In spiritual things 'twould grieve ones heart to see
What (2) careless fools, these careful men can be. (2) Isa.32.9, 10, 11.
They act like men of common sense bereaven,
Secure their Lands; and they'l trust God for heaven.
How many Cases have you to submit,
To Lawyers judgments? (3) Ministers may sit (3) Hos.11.2.
From week to week, and yet not see the face
Of one that brings a soul concerning Case.
Yea, which is worse; how seldom do you cry
To God for counsel? (4) or beg him to try (4) Psal.139. 23.
Your hearts; and strictest inquisition make
Into your state, discover your mistake.

O stupid souls! clouded with ignorance,
Is Christ, and heaven no (5) fair inheritance (5) Phil.3.8,9
Compar'd with yours? or is (6) eternity (6) 2 Cor.4.18
A shorter term than yours? that you should ply
The one so close, and totally neglect
The other; as not worth your least respect.
Perhaps the Devil whose plot from you's conceal'd,
Perswades your title's good; and firmly seal'd
By God's own Spirit; though you never found
One act of saving grace (7) to lay a ground (7) Eph.1 13.
For that perswasion. Soul he hath thee fast,
Though he'l not let thee know it till the last.

Lord waken sinners, make them understand
'Twixt thee, and them; how rawly matters stand.
Give them no quiet rest, until they see
Their souls secur'd, better than Lands can be.

Occasional Meditations

UPON

BIRDS, BEASTS, TREES, FLOWERS, RIVERS, and others Objects.

MEDITATIONS on BIRDS.

MEDIT. I.

Upon the singing of a Nightingale.

WHO that hears such various, ravishing, and exquisite melody, would imagine the bird that makes it, to be of so small and contemptible a body, and feather? her charming voice ingaged not only mine attentive ear, but my feet also, to make a nearer approach to that shady bush, in which that excellent Musician sate vailed; and the nearer I came, the sweeter the melody still seemed to be; but when I had descried the bird her self, and found her to be little bigger, and no better feather'd than a sparrow, it gave my thoughts the occasion of this following application.

This Bird seems to me the lively emblem of the formal hypocrite, (1) In that she is more in sound than substance, a loud

a loud and excellent voice, but a little despicable body; and it recall'd to my thoughts the story of *Plutarch*, who hearing a Nightingale, desired to have one killed to feed upon, not questioning but she would please the palate as well as the ear; but when the Nightingale was brought him, and he saw what a poor little creature it was, Truly said he, thou art *vox & preterea nihil*, a meer voice and nothing else: So is the hypocrite; did a man hear him some times in more publick duties and discourses, O thinks he, what an excellent man is this! what a choice and rare spirit is he of? but follow him home, observe him in his private conversation and retirements, and then you will judge *Plutarchs* note as applicable to him as the Nightingale. (2) This Bird is observed to charm most sweetly, and set her spirits all on work, when she perceives she hath ingaged attention; so doth the hypocrite, who lives and feeds upon the applause and commendation of his admirers, and cares little for any of those duties which bring in no returns of praise from men; he is little pleased with a silent melody and private pleasure betwixt God and his own soul.

Scire tuum nihil est nisi te scire hoc sciat alter.
Alas! his knowledge is not worth a pin,
If he proclaim not what he hath within.

He is more for the Theatre than the Closet, and of such Christ saith, Verily they have their reward. (3) *Naturalists* observe the Nightingale to be an ambitious Bird, that cannot endure to be out-vied by any, she will rather chuse to die than be excell'd; a notable instance whereof we have in the following pleasant Poem, translated out of *Strada*, concerning the Nightingale and a Lutanist.

Now the declining Sun did downward bend
From higher heavens, and from his locks did send
A milder flame, when neer to *Tibers* flow
A Lunatist allayed his careful wo,

fears, and distracted with doubts, as I have been about the state of my soul. Lord, what shall I do? I have often carried my doubts and scruples to thine Ordinances, waiting for satisfaction to be spoken there. I have carried them to those I have judged skilful and faithful, begging their resolution and help, but nothing will stick. Still my fears are daily renewed. O my God, do thou decide my case! tell me how the state stands betwixt thee and me; my dayes consume in trouble, I can neither do, or enjoy any good, whilst things are thus with me; all my earthly enjoyments are dry and uncomfortable things; yea, which is much worse, all my duties and thine Ordinances prove so too, by reason of the troubles of my heart! I am no ornament to my profession, nay, I am a discouragement and stumbling-block to others? I will hearken and hear what God the Lord will speak, O that it might be peace! if thou do not speak it none can; and when thou doest, keep thy servant from returning again to folly, lest I make fresh work for an accusing conscience, and give new matter to the adversary of my soul!

3. The assured Christians Reflection.

But thou (my soul) enjoyest a double mercy from thy bountiful God, who hath not only given thee a sound title, but also the clear evidence and knowledge thereof. I am gathering, and daily feeding upon the full ripe fruits of assurance, which grow upon the top boughs of faith, whilst many of my poor brethren drink their own tears, and have their teeth broken with gravel stones. Lord, thou hast set my soul upon her high places, but let me not exalt my self, because thou hast exalted me; nor grow wanton because I walk at liberty, lest for the abuse of such precious liberty, thou clap my old chains upon me, and shut up my soul again in prison.

The *POEM.*

MEn can't be quiet till they be assur'd
That their estate is good, and well secur'd.
To able Counsel they their Deed submit
Intreating them with care t'examine it

Fearing

Fearing ſome clauſe an enemy may wreſt,
Or find a flaw; whereby he may deveſt
Them, and their children. O who can but ſee
How wiſe men in their generation be! Luk. 16. 8.
But do they (1) equal cares and fears expreſs (1) Act. 18. 17.
About their everlaſting happineſs?
In ſpiritual things 'twould grieve ones heart to ſee
What (2) careleſs fools, theſe careful men can be. (2) Iſa. 32. 9, 10, 11.
They act like men of common ſenſe bereaven,
Secure their Lands; and they'l truſt God for heaven.
How many Caſes have you to ſubmit,
To Lawyers judgments? (3) Miniſters may ſit (3) Hoſ. 11. 2.
From week to week, and yet not ſee the face
Of one that brings a ſoul concerning Caſe.
Yea, which is worſe; how ſeldom do you cry
To God for counſel? (4) or beg him to try (4) Pſal. 139. 23.
Your hearts; and ſtricteſt inquiſition make
Into your ſtate, diſcover your miſtake.

O ſtupid ſouls! clouded with ignorance,
Is Chriſt, and heaven no (5) fair inheritance (5) Phil. 3. 8, 9
Compar'd with yours? or is (6) eternity (6) 2 Cor. 4. 18
A ſhorter term than yours? that you ſhould ply
The one ſo cloſe, and totally neglect
The other; as not worth your leaſt reſpect.
Perhaps the Devil whoſe plot from you's conceal'd,
Perſwades your title's good; and firmly ſeal'd
By God's own Spirit; though you never found
One act of ſaving grace (7) to lay a ground (7) Eph. 1 13.
For that perſwaſion. Soul he hath thee faſt,
Though he'l not let thee know it till the laſt.

Lord waken ſinners, make them underſtand
'Twixt thee, and them; how rawly matters ſtand.
Give them no quiet reſt, until they ſee
Their ſouls ſecur'd, better than Lands can be.

OCCA-

Occasional Meditations

UPON

BIRDS, BEASTS, TREES, FLOWERS, RIVERS, and others Objects.

MEDITATIONS on BIRDS.

MEDIT. I.

Upon the singing of a Nightingale.

WHO that hears such various, ravishing, and exquisite melody, would imagine the bird that makes it, to be of so small and contemptible a body, and feather? her charming voice ingaged not only mine attentive ear, but my feet also, to make a nearer approach to that shady bush, in which that excellent Musician sate vailed; and the nearer I came, the sweeter the melody still seemed to be; but when I had descried the bird her self, and found her to be little bigger, and no better feather'd than a sparrow, it gave my thoughts the occasion of this following application.

This Bird seems to me the lively emblem of the formal hypocrite, (1) In that she is more in sound than substance, a loud

a loud and excellent voice, but a little despicable body; and it recall'd to my thoughts the story of *Plutarch*, who hearing a Nightingale, desired to have one killed to feed upon, not questioning but she would please the palate as well as the ear; but when the Nightingale was brought him, and he saw what a poor little creature it was, Truly said he, thou art *vox & preterea nihil*, a meer voice and nothing else: So is the hypocrite; did a man hear him some times in more publick duties and discourses, O thinks he, what an excellent man is this! what a choice and rare spirit is he of? but follow him home, observe him in his private conversation and retirements, and then you will judge *Plutarchs* note as applicable to him as the Nightingale. (2) This Bird is observed to charm most sweetly, and set her spirits all on work, when she perceives she hath ingaged attention; so doth the hypocrite, who lives and feeds upon the applause and commendation of his admirers, and cares little for any of those duties which bring in no returns of praise from men; he is little pleased with a silent melody and private pleasure betwixt God and his own soul.

Scire tuum nihil est nisi te scire hoc sciat alter.
Alas! his knowledge is not worth a pin,
If he proclaim not what he hath within.

He is more for the Theatre than the Closet, and of such Christ saith, Verily they have their reward. (3) *Naturalists* observe the Nightingale to be an ambitious Bird, that cannot endure to be out-vied by any, she will rather chuse to die than be excell'd; a notable instance whereof we have in the following pleasant Poem, translated out of *Strada*, concerning the Nightingale and a Lutanist.

Now the declining Sun did downward bend
From higher heavens, and from his locks did send
A milder flame, when neer to *Tibers* flow
A Lunatist allayed his careful wo,

With ſounding charms, and in a greeny ſeat
Of ſhady Oak, took ſhelter from the heat
A Nightingale o'reheard him that did uſe
To ſojourn in the neighbour Groves, the muſe
That fill'd the place, the Syrene of the wood
(Poor harmleſs Syrene) ſtealing near ſhe ſtood
Cloſe lurking in the leaves attentively
Recording that unwonted melody.
She con'd it to her ſelf, and every ſtrain
His fingers play'd her throat return'd again.
The Lutaniſt perceiv'd an anſwer ſent
From th' imitating Bird, and was content
To ſhew her play, more fully than in haſte
He tryes his Lute and giving her a taſte
Of the enſuing quarrel, nimbly beats
On all his ſtrings, as nimbly ſhe repeats
And wildly ranging o're a thouſand keys
Sounds a ſhrill warning of her after layes;
With rowling hand the Lutaniſt then plyes
The trembling threeds ſometimes in ſcornful wiſe
He bruſhes down the ſtrings and ſtrikes them all
With one even ſtroke, then takes them ſeveral
And culls them o're again, his ſparkling joynts
With buſie deſcant mincing on the points
Reach back again with nimble touch, then ſtayes.
The Bird replies, and art with art repays.
Sometimes as one unexpert, and in doubt
How ſhe might weild her voice, ſhe draweth out
Her tone at large, and doth at firſt prepare
A ſolemn ſtrain, nor wear'd with winding air,
But with an equal pitch, and conſtant throat
Makes cleer the paſſage for her gliding note;
Then croſs-diviſion diverſly ſhe playes
And loudly chanting out her quickeſt layes
Poyſes the ſound, and with a quivering voice
Falls back again: he wondring how ſo choice.
So various harmony could iſſue out
From ſuch a little throat, doth go about

Some

Some harder Lessons, and with wondrous art
Changing the strings doth up the treble dart
And downward smite the Base, with painful stroke
He beats; and as the Trumpet doth provoke
Sluggards to fight, even so his wanton skill
With mingled discord joyns the hoarse and shrill,
The Bird this also tunes, and whilst she cuts
Sharp notes with melting voice, and mingled puts
Measures of middle sound, then suddenly
She thunders deep and jugs it inwardly
With gentle murmur, clear and dull she sings
By course, as when the martial warning rings;
Believ't the Minstrel blusht, with angry mood
Inflam'd (quoth he) thou Chantress of the wood
Either from thee I'le bear the price away
Or vanquisht, break my Lute without delay.
Unimitable accents then he strains
His hand flyes on the strings, in one he chains
Far different numbers, chasing here and there
And all the strings he labours every where;
Both flat and sharp he strikes, and stately grows
To prouder strains, and backward as he goes
Doubly divides, and closing up his layes
Like a full Quire, a shivering consort playes;
Then pausing stood in expectation
Of his corrival, nor durst answer on.
But she, when practise long her throat had whet
Enduring not to yield, at once doth set
Her spirits all to work, and all in vain;
For whilst she labours to express again
With natures simple voice such divers keys
With slender pipes such lofty notes as these
O're matcht with high designs, o're matcht with wo,
Just at the last encounter of her foe
She faints, she dyes, falls on his instrument
That conquer'd her, a fitting monument.
So far even little souls are driven on
Struck with a vertuous emulation.

And even as far are hypocrites driven on by their ambition and pride, which is the spur that provokes them in their religious duties.

MEDIT. II.

Upon the sight of many small Birds chirping about a dead Hawk.

HEaring a whole quire of Birds chirping and twinking together, it ingaged my curiosity a little to enquire into the occasion of that convocation, which mine eye quickly inform'd me of; for I perceived a dead Hawk in the bush, about which they made such a noise, seeming to triumph at the death of their enemy; and I could not blame them to sing his knell, who like a *Cannibal* was wont to feed upon their living bodies; tearing them limb from limb, and scaring them with his frightful appearance. This Bird which living, was so formidable, being dead the poorest Wren or Titmouse fears not to chirp or hop over. This brings to my thoughts the base and ignoble ends of the greatest Tyrants and greedy ingrossers of the world, of whom (whilst living) men were more afraid than birds of a Hawk, but dead became objects of contempt and scorn. The death of such Tyrants is both inglorious and unlamented; *When the wicked perish, there is shouting*, Prov. 11.10. which was exemplified to the life at the death of *Nero*, of whom the Poet thus sings,

Cum mors crudelem rapuisset sæva Neronem
Credibile est multos Romam agitasse jocos.
When cruel *Nero* dy'd th' Historian tells.
How *Rome* did mourn with Bonefires, Plays and Bells.

Remarkable for contempt and shame have the ends of many bloudy Tyrants been; so *Pompey* the great, of whom *Claudian* the Poet sings,

Nudus

Nudus paſcit aves jacet en qui poſſidet orbem
Exiguæ telluris inops——————
Birds eat his fleſh, lo now he cannot have
Who rul'd the world, a ſpace to make a grave.

The like is ſtoried of *Alexander* the great, who lay unburied thirty dayes, and *William* the Conqueror, with many other ſuch Birds of prey; whilſt a beneficial and holy life is uſually cloſed up in an honourable and much lamented death.

For mine own part, I wiſh I may ſo order my converſation in the world, that I may live when I am dead in the affections of the beſt, and leave an honourable teſtimony in the conſciences of the worſt; that I may oppreſs none, do good to all, and ſay when I dye, as good *Ambroſe* did, I am neither aſhamed to live, nor afraid to dye.

MEDIT. III.

Upon the ſight of a Black-bird taking ſanctuary in a buſh from a purſuing Hawk.

WHen I ſaw how hardly the poor bird was put to it to ſave her ſelf from her enemy, who hover'd juſt over the buſh in which ſhe was fluttering and ſqueeking, I could not but haſten to relieve her, (pity and ſuccour being a due debt to the diſtreſſed) which when I had done, the bird would not depart from the buſh, though her enemy were gone; this act of kindneſs was abundantly repaid by this Meditation, with which I returned to my walk. My ſoul, like this Bird, was once diſtreſſed, purſued, yea, ſeized by Satan, who had certainly made a prey of it, had not Jeſus Chriſt been a ſanctuary to it in that hour of danger. How ready did I find him to receive my poor ſoul into his protection? then did he make good that ſweet promiſe to my experience, Thoſe that come

come unto me, I will in no wise cast out. It call'd to mind that pretty and pertinent story of the Philosopher, who walking in the fields a Bird pursued by a Hawk, flew into his bosom; he took her out, and said, *Poor Bird, I will neither wrong thee, nor expose thee to thine enemy, since thou comest unto me for refuge.* So tender, and more than so, is the Lord Jesus to distressed souls, that come unto him. Blessed Jesus! how should I love and praise thee? glorifie and admire thee, for that great salvation thou hast wrought for me. If this Bird had fallen into the claws of her enemy, she had been torn to pieces indeed, and devoured, but then a few minutes had dispatcht her, and ended all her pain and misery; but had my soul fallen into the hand of Satan, there had been no end of its misery.

Would not this scared Bird be flusht out of the bush that secured her, though I had chased away her enemy? and wilt thou (my soul) ever be inticed or scared from Christ thy refuge? O let this for ever ingage thee to keep close to Christ, and make me say with *Ezra*; and now, O Lord! since thou hast given me such a deliverance as this, should I again break thy commandments?

MEDIT. IV.

Upon the sight of divers Lennets intermingling with a flock of Sparrows.

METhinks these Birds do fitly resemble the gaudy Gallants, and the plain peasants: how spruce and richly adorned with shining and various coloured feathers, (like scarlet, richly laid with gold and silver lace) are those? how plainly clad, in a home-spun Countrey russet are these? Fine feathers (saith our Proverb) make proud birds; and yet the feathers of the Sparrow, are as useful and beneficial, both for warmth and flight, though not so gay and ornamental as the others; and if both were stript out of their feathers,

thers, the Sparrow would prove the better Bird of the two; by which I see, that the greatest worth doth not alwayes lye under the finest cloaths. And besides, God can make mean and homely garments as useful and beneficial to poor despised Christians, as the ruffling and shining garments of wanton Gallants are to them, and when God shall strip men out of all external excellencies, these will be found to excel their glittering neighbours, in true worth and excellency.

Little would a man think such rich treasures of grace, wisdom, humility, &c. lay under some russet Coats.

Sæpe sub attrita latitat sapientia veste.
Under poor garments more true worth may be,
Than under silks that whistle, who but he?

Whilst on the other side, the heart of the wicked (as *Solomon* hath observed) is little worth, how much soever his cloaths be worth. Alas! it falls out too frequently among us, as it doth with men in the *Indies*, who walk over the rich veins of gold and silver Oar, which lyes hid under a ragged and barren surface, and know it not. For my own part, I desire not to value any man by what is extrinsecal and worldly, but by that true internal excellency of grace, which makes the face to shine in the eyes of God and good men: I would contemn a vile person, though never so glorious in the eye of the world; but honour such as fear the Lord, how sordid and despicable soever to appearance.

MEDIT. V.

Upon the sight of a Robbin-red-breast picking up a worm from a Mole-hill then raising.

OBserving the Mole working industriously beneath, and the Bird watching so intently above; I made a stand to observe the issue. When in a little time the bird descends and seizes

seizes upon a worm, which I perceived was crawling apace from the enemy below that hunted her, but fell to the share of another which from above waited for her. My thoughts presently suggested these Meditations from that occasion; me thought this poor worm seem'd to be the Emblem of my poor soul, which is more endangered by its own lusts of pride and covetousness, than this worm was by the Mole and Bird; my pride, like the aspiring Bird watches for it above; my covetousness, like this subterranean Mole, digging for it beneath. Poor soul! what a sad Dilemma art thou brought to? If thou go down into the caverns of the earth, there thou art a prey to thy covetousness that hunts thee; and if thou aspire, or but creep upward, there thy pride waits to ensnare thee. Distressed soul! whither wilt thou go? ascend thou mayest, not by a vain elation, but by a heavenly conversation, beside which, there is no way for thy preservation; the way of life is above to the wise, &c.

Again, I could not but observe the accidental benefit this poor harmless Bird obtained by the labour of the Mole, who hunting intentionally for her self, unburroughed and ferrited out this worm for the Bird, who possibly was hungry enough, and could not have been relieved for this time, but by the Mole, the fruit of whose labours she now fed upon. Even thus the Lord oft-times makes good his word to his people: *The wealth of the wicked is laid up for the just.* And again, *The earth shall help the woman.* This was fully exemplified in *David*, to whom *Nabal* that churlish muck-worm speaks all in possessives. Shall I take my bread? &c. and give it to one I know not whom; and yet *David* reaps the fruit of all the pains and toyl of *Nabal* at last. Let it never incourage me to idleness, that God sometimes gives his people the fruit of others sweat; but if providence reduce me to necessity, and disable me from helping my self, I doubt not then but it will provide instruments to do it. The Bird was an hungry and could not dig.

MEDIT.

MEDIT. VI.

Upon the shooting of two Finches fighting in the Air.

HOw soon hath death ended the quarrel betwixt these two little Combatants! had they agreed better, they might have lived longer; 'twas their own contention, that gave both the opportunity and provocation of their death; and though living they could not, yet being dead they can lye quietly together in my hand.

Fooliſh Birds, was it not enough that Birds of prey watched to devour them, but they muſt peck and ſcratch one another? Thus have I ſeen the Birds of Paradiſe (Saints I mean) tearing and wounding each other, like ſo many birds of prey, and by their unchriſtian conteſts giving the occaſion of their common ruin; yea, and that not only when at liberty, as theſe were; but when incaged alſo; and yet, as one well obſerves, if ever Chriſtians will agree, 'twill either be in a priſon, or in heaven; for in a priſon their quarrelſom luſts lye low, and in heaven they ſhall be utterly done away.

But O! what pity is it, that thoſe who ſhall agree ſo perfectly in heaven, ſhould bite and devour each other upon earth? that it ſhould be ſaid of them, as one ingeniouſly obſerved, who ſaw their carcaſes lye together; as if they had lovingly embraced each other, who fell together by a Duel, *Quanta amicitia ſe invicem amplectuntur; qui mutua & implacabili inimicitia perierunt.*

In bracing one another, now they lye
Who by each others bloudy hands did dye.

Or as he ſaid, who obſerved how quietly and peaceably the duſt and bones, even of enemies did lye together in the grave; *Non tanta vivi pace conjuncti eſſetis*; you did not live together ſo peaceably. If conſcience of Chriſts command will not, yet the conſideration of common ſafety ſhould powerfully perſwader to unity and amity.

MEDIT. VII.

Upon the singing of a blind Finch by night.

A Dear friend, who was a great observer of the works of God in nature, told me, That being entertain'd with a sight of many rarities at a friends house in *London*; among other things, his friends shewed him a Finch, whose eyes being put out, would frequently sing, even at midnight. This Bird in my opinion, is the lively Emblem of such careless and unconcerned persons, as the Prophet describes, *Amos* 6.4,5,6. who chant to the Viol, when a dismal night of trouble and affliction hath overshadowed the Church. You would have thought it strange to have heard this Bird sing in the night, when all others are in a deep silence; except the Owl, an unclean Bird, and the Nightingale which before we made the Emblem of the Hypocrite. And as strange it is, that any except the prophane and hypocritical, should so unseasonably express their mirth and jollity; that any of *Sions* children should live in pleasure, whilst she her self lyes in tears. The people of God in *Psal.* 137. tell us, in what postures of sorrow they sate; even like Birds, with their heads under their wings, during the night of their captivity. *How shall we sing the Lords song in a strange Land?* 'Ts like enough, such as can sing and chaunt in the night of the Churches trouble, have well feathered their nests in the dayes of her posterity; however, let them know, that God will turn their unseasonable mirth into a sadder note; and those that now sit sad and silent, shall shortly sing for joy of heart, when the Winter is past, the rain over and gone, the flowers appear again upon the earth, and the time of the singing of Birds is come.

MEDIT. VIII.

Upon the comparing of two Birds nests.

'Tis pretty to observe the structure and commodiousness of the habitations of these little Architects, who though they act not by reason and counsel, but only by natural instinct, yet reason it self could hardly have contrived a neater building of such simple materials. How neatly hath the Thrush ceiled or plaistered his nest, with admirable art and industry? how warmly hath the Finch matted his? and both well fenced against the injury of the weather.

How comfortably hath nature provided convenient habitations, for these weak and tender young ones, who have warm lodging, and variety of provisions hourly brought them, without their care or pains? This trifling object suggests to my thoughts, a more excellent and serious contemplation, even the wonderful and unparallel'd abasement of *Jesus Christ*, who for my sake voluntarily submitted himself to a more destitute and neglected state, than these Birds of the Air; for *Mat.*8.20. he saith, *The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.*

Heins. in loc.

Vulpibus in saltu rupes excisa latebras
Præbet, & aereis avibus dat silva quietem:
Ast hominis Nato nullis succedere tectis
Est licitum ——————
The craggy rock to foxes holes affords,
The pleasant woods, a resting place to birds.
For Christ no fixed habitations found
But what was borrowed, or the naked ground.

O melting consideration! that the glorious Son of God, *John* 1.14. *The Lord of glory*, Jam. 2. 1. *The brightness of his fathers glory*, Heb. 1. 3. *Who was rich*, 2 Cor. 8. 9. *And*

thought it no robbery to be equal with God, Phil. 2. 8. who from *all eternity* was infinitely and ineffably *delighting and rejoycing in the bosom of his father*, Prov. 8. 30. That he, I say, should manifest himself *in flesh*, 2 *Tim.* 3, 16. yea, *in the likeness of sinful flesh*, Rom. 8. 3. that is, in flesh, that had the marks and effects of sin upon it, as hunger, thirst, pain, weariness and mortality; and not only so, but to chuse such a state of outward meanness and poverty, never being possessed of a house in this world; but living as a stranger in other mens houses, and stooping in this respect to a lower condition than the very birds of the Air, and all this for enemies. O let it work, both admiration and thankfulness in my soul! my body is better accommodated than the body of my Lord. Dear Jesus! by how much the viler thou madest thy selfe for me, by so much the dearer shalt thou be to me.

Quanto pro me vilior, tanto mihi charior. Bern.

MEDIT. IX.

Upon the early singing of Birds.

HOw am I reproved of sluggishness by these watchful Birds! which cheerfully entertain the very dawning of the morning, with their cheerful and delightful warblings! they set their little spirits all awork betimes, whilst my nobler spirits are bound with the bonds of soft and downy slumbers. For shame my soul! suffer not that Publican sleep to seize so much of thy time, yea, thy best and freshest time; reprove and chide thy sluggish body, as a good Bishop once did, when upon the same occasion he said, *Surrexerunt passeres, & stertunt Pontifices.*

The early chirping Sparrows may reprove
Such lazy Bishops as their beds do love.

Of many sluggards it may be said, as *Tully* said of *Verres*, the Deputy of *Sicily*, *Quod nunquam solem nec orientem, nec occidentem viderat*; that he never saw the Sun rising, being in bed after, nor setting, being in bed before.

'Tis

'Tis pity, that Chriſtians of all men ſhould ſuffer ſleep to cut ſuch large thongs out of ſo narrow a hide, as their time on earth is. But alas! it is not ſo much early riſing, as a wiſe improving thoſe freſh and free hours with God, that will inrich the ſoul; elſe, as our Proverb ſaith, a man may be early up, and never the neer; yea, far better it is to be found in bed ſleeping, than to be up doing nothing, or that which is worſe than nothing. O my ſoul! learn to prepoſſeſs thy ſelf every morning with the thoughts of God, and ſuffer not thoſe freſh and ſweet operations of thy mind, to be proſtituted to earthly things; for that is experimentally true, which one in this caſe hath pertinently obſerved; That if the world get the ſtart of Religion in the morning, it will be hard for Religion to overtake it all the day after.

Mr. *Caſe* in Epiſt. to the morn. Lect.

MEDIT. X.

Upon the haltering of Birds with a grain of hair.

OBſerving in a ſnowy ſeaſon, how the poor hungry Birds were haltred and drawn in by a grain of hair cunningly caſt over their heads, whilſt poor creatures they were buſily feeding, and ſuſpected no danger; and even whilſt their companions were drawn away from them, one after another, all the interruption it gave the reſt, was only for a minute or two, whilſt they ſtood peeping into that hole through which their companions were drawn, and then fell to their meat again, as buſily as before. I could not chuſe but ſay, Even thus ſupprizingly doth death ſteal upon the children of men, whilſt they are wholly intent upon the cares and pleaſures of this life, not at all ſuſpecting its ſo near approach. Theſe birds ſaw not the hand that inſnared them, nor do they ſee the hand of death plucking them one after another into the grave.

Omnibus

Ovid. *Omnibus obscuras injecit illa manus*
Death's steps are swift, and yet no noise it make;
Its hand unseen, but yet most surely takes.

And even as the surviving Birds for a little time seemed to stand affrighted, peeping after their companions, and then as busie at ever to their meat again: Just so it fares with the careless inconsiderate world, who see others daily dropping into eternity round about them, and for the present are a little startled, and will look into the grave after their neighbours, and then fall as busily to their earthly imployments and pleasures again as ever, till their own turn comes.

I know, my God! that I must die as well as others; but, O let me not die as do others, let me see death before I feel it, and conquer it before it kill me; let it not come as an enemy upon my back, but rather let me meet it as a friend half way! Die I must, but let me lay up that good treasure before I go, *Mat.* 6. 19. carry with me a good conscience when I go, 2 *Tim.* 4. 6, 7. and leave behind me a good example when I am gone, and then let death come and welcom!

MEDITATIONS upon Beasts.

MEDIT. I.

Upon the clogging of a straying Beasts.

HAd this Bullock contended himself, and remained quietly within his own bounds, his Owner had never put such an heavy clog upon his neck; but I see the prudent Husbandman chuses rather to keep him with his clog, than lose him for want of one. What is clog is to him, that is affliction and trouble to me; had my soul kept close with God in liberty and prosperity, he would never thus have clogged me

me with adversity; yea, and happy were it for me, if I might stray from God no more, who hath thus clogged me with preventive afflictions. If with *David* I might say, *Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I have kept thy word, Psa.* 119.67 O my soul! 'tis better for thee, to have thy pride clogged with poverty, thy ambition with reproach, thy carnal expectancies with constant disappointments, than to be at liberty, to run from God and duty.

'Tis true, I am sometimes as weary of these troubles, as this poor Beast is of the clog he draws after him, and often wish my self rid of them; but yet, if God should take them off, for ought I know I might have cause to wish them on again, to prevent a greater mischief. 'Tis storied of *Basil*, that for many years he was sorely afflicted with an inveterate head-ach, (that was his clog) he often prayed for the removal of it, at last God removed it; but instead thereof he was sorely exercised with the motions and temptations of lust, which when he perceived, he as earnestly desired his head-ach again, to prevent a greater evil. Lord! if my corruptions may be prevented by my affliction, I refuse not to be clogged with them; but my soul rather desires thou wouldst hasten the time when I shall be for ever freed from them both.

MEDIT. II.

Upon the love of a Dog to his Master.

HOw many weary steps through mire and dirt, hath this poor Dog followed my horse heels to day? and all this for a very poor reward, for all he gets by it at night, is but bones and blows, yet will he not leave my company, but is content upon such hard terms, to travel with me from day to day.

O my soul! what conviction and shame may this leave upon thee? who art oftentimes even weary of following thy Master *Christ*, whose rewards and incouragements of obedience

dience are so incomparably sweet and sure. I cannot beat back this Dog from following me, but every inconsiderable trouble is enough to discourage me in the way of my duty. Ready I am to resolve as that Scribe did, *Mat.* 8. 19. *Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest*; but how doth my heart faulter when I must encounter with the difficulties of the way? O! let me make a whole heart-choice of Christ, for my portion and happiness! and then I shall never leave him, nor turn back from following him, though the present difficulties were much more, and the present incouragements much less.

MEDIT. III.

Upon the fighting of two Rams.

TAking notice how furiously these Sheep which by nature are mild and gentle, did yet like Bulls push each other, taking their advantage by going back to meet with a greater rage and fury. Methought I saw in this a plain Emblem of the unchristian contests and animosities which fall out amongst them that call themselves the people of God, who in Scripture are also stiled Sheep, for their meekness and innocency; and yet, through the remaining corruptions that are in them, thus do they push each other; (as one long since complained) *non secus ac.*

Cum duo conversis inimica in prælia tauri,
Frontibus incurrunt ——

Shall Christians one auother wound and push,
Like furious Bulls, when they together rush?

The fighting of these Sheep doth in two respects, notably comport with the sinful practises of contending Christians, (1.) That in this fight they ingage with their heads one against another; and what are they but those head-notions,

or

or opposition of Sciences, falsly so called, that have made so many broyls and uproars in the Christian world? O! what clashings have these heady opinions caused in the Churches? first heads, and then hearts have clashed. Christians have not distinguished betwixt *adversarius litis, & personæ*; an adversary to the *opinion*, and to the *person*; but dipt their tongues and pens in vinegar and gall, shamefully aspersing and reproaching one another, because their understandings were not cast into one mould, and their heads all of a bigness. But (2) that which Countrey-men observe from the fighting of Sheep, *That it presages foul and stormy weather*, is much more certainly consequent upon the fighting of Christs Sheep. Do these clash and push? surely *it is an infallible prognostick of an ensuing storm*, Mal.4.6.

MEDIT. IV.

Upon the catching of a Horse in a fat Pasture.

WHen this Horse was kept in poor short leas, where he had much scope, but little grass how gentle and tractable was he then? he would not only stand quiet to be taken, but come to hand of his own accord, and follow me up and down the field for a crust of bread, or handful of Oats; but since I turned him into this fat pasture, he comes no more to me, nor will suffer me to come neer him; but throws up his heels wantonly against me, and flies from me, as if I were rather his *enemy* than *Benefactor*. In this I behold the carriage of my own heart towards God, who the more he hath done for me, the seldomer doth he hear from me; in a low and afflicted state, how tractable is my heart to duty? then it comes to the foot of God voluntarily; but in an exalted condition, how wildly doth my heart run from God and duty? With this ungrateful requital God faulted his own people, *Jer.* 2.31. teachable and tractable in the *wilderness*, but when fatted in that rich pasture *Canaan*, Then, *we are Lords*,

we will come no more to thee. How soon are all Gods former benefits forgotten? and how often is that ancient Observation verified, even in his own people?

Μετὰ τὴν δόσιν παχισα γηρασκει χαρις.
Post munera cito consenescit gratia.
No sooner do we gifts on some bestow,
But presently our gifts gray headed grow.

But that's a bad Tenant, that will maintain a Suit at Law against his Landlord, with his own rent; and a bad heart that will fight against God, with his own mercies. I wish it may be with my heart, as it is reported to be with the waters in the Kingdom of *Congo*, that are never so sweet to the taste, as when the tide is at the highest.

MEDIT. V.

Upon the hunting of a Deer.

THe full-mouthed cry of these Dogs, which from the morning have hunted this poor tired Deer, which is now no longer able to stand before them, but is compassed round with them, who thirst for, and will presently suck her blood; brings to my thoughts the condition and state of *Jesus Christ*, in the dayes of his flesh, who was thus hunted from place to place by blood-thirsty enemies. Upon this very account, the 22. *Psal.* which treats of his death, is inscribed with the title of *Aijeleth Shahar*, which signifies the *Hind of the morning*, and fully imports the same notion, which this occasion presented me with; for look, as the *Hind* or *Deer*, which is intended to be run down that day, is rouzed by the Dogs early in the morning. So was Christ, in the very morning of his infancy, by bloudy *Herod*, and that cruel pack confederated with him. Thus was he chased from place to place, till that was fulfilled which was prophetically written of him in *ver.* 16. of the forecited *Psalm*; *For dogs have com-*

compassed me about, the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me; they pierced my hands and my feet.

And canst thou expect, O my soul! to fare better than he did, or escape the rage of bloody men? Surely, if the Spirit of Christ dwell in thee; if his holiness have favoured thee, these Dogs will wind it, and give thee chase too; they go upon the scent of holiness still, and would hunt to destruction every one, in whom there is *aliquid Christi*, any thing of Christ, if the gracious providence of the Lord did not sometimes rate them off: For it is no less a pleasure, which some wicked ones take in hunting the people of God, than what *Claudian* the *Poet* observes men use to take, in hunting wild beasts.

Venator defessa thoro quum membra reponit
Mens tamen ad Sylvas, & sua lustra redit.
Whilst weary Huntsmen in the night do sleep,
Their fancies in the Woods; still hunting keep.

Lord! should I with the hypocrite decline the profession and practise of holiness, to escape the rage of persecuting enemies, at what time they cease, my own conscience would begin to hunt me like a Blood-hound; let me rather chuse to be chased by men than God, to flee before pursuing enemies, than be dogged from day to day with a guilty conscience.

MEDITATIONS upon Trees.

MEDIT. I.

Upon the fall of blossoms, nipt by a frosty morning.

BEholding in an early Spring, fruit Trees embossed with beautiful blossoms of various colours, which breathed

forth the delicious odours into the circumambient air, and adorned the branches on which they grew, like so many rich jewels, or glittering pendents; and further observing, how these perfumed blossoms dropt off, being bitten with the frost, and discoloured all the ground, as if a shower of snow had fallen; I said, within my self, these sweet and early blossoms are not unlike my sweet and early affections to the Lord, in the dayes of my first acquaintance with him. O! what fervent love? panting desires, and heavenly delights beautified my soul in those dayes! the odoriferous scent of the sweetest blossoms, the morning breath of the most fragrant flowers, hath not half that sweetness with which those my first affections were inriched. O! happy time, thrice pleasant Spring! my soul hath it still in remembrance, and is humbled within me, for these also were but blossoms which now are nipt and faded, that first flourish is gone; my heart is like the Winters earth, because thy face, Lord, is to me like a Winter Sun. *Awake, O North wind! and come, South wind, blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out, then let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruit!*

MEDIT. II.

Upon the knitting or setting of fruit.

I Have often observed, that when the blossoms of a tree, set and knit, though the flourish thereof be gone, and nothing but the bare rudiment of the expected fruit be left; yet then the fruit is much better secured from the danger of frosts and winds, than whilst it remained in the flower or blossom; for now it hath past one of those *critical periods*, in which so many trees miscarry and lose their fruit. And methought, this *natural Observation* fairly led me to this *Theological Proposition. That good motions and holy purposes in the soul, are never secured and past their most dangerous* Crisis, *till they*

they be turned into fixed reſolutions, and anſwerable executions, which is as the knitting and ſetting of them.

Upon this Propoſition my melting thoughts thus dilated, Happy had it been for thee, my ſoul! had all the bleſſed motions of the Spirit been thus knit and fixed in thee. O, how have mine affections blown and budded under the warm beams of the Goſpel! but a chill blaſt from the cares, troubles and delights of the world without, and the vanity and deadneſs of the heart within have blaſted all; my goodneſs hath been but as a morning dew, or early cloud that vaniſheth away: And even of divine Ordinances I may ſay, what is ſaid of humane Ordinances, *They have periſhed in the uſing.* A bloſſom is but *fructus imperfectus, & ordinabilis*, an imperfect thing in it ſelf, and ſomething in order to fruit; a good motion and holy purpoſe, is but *opus imperfectum, & ordinabile*, an imperfect work, in order to a compleat work of the Spirit, When that *primus impetus*, thoſe firſt motions were ſtrong upon my heart, had I then purſued them in the force and vigour of them, how many difficulties might I have overcome? Revive thy work, O Lord! and give not to my ſoul a miſcarrying womb, or dry breaſts.

MEDIT. III.

Upon the ſight of a fair ſpreading Oak.

WHat a lofty flouriſhing Tree is here? It ſeems rather to be a little Wood, than a ſingle Tree; every limb thereof having the dimenſions and branches of a Tree in it; and yet as great as it is, it was once but a little ſlip, which one might pull up with two fingers; this vaſt body was contained virtually, and potentially in a ſmall Acorn. Well then, I will never deſpiſe the day of ſmall things, nor deſpair of arriving to an eminency of grace, though at preſent it be but as a bruiſed reed, and the things that are in me, be ready to dye. As things in nature, ſo the things of the

Spirit

Spirit grow up to their fulneſs and perfection, by ſlow and inſenſible degrees. The famous and heroical acts of the moſt renowned believers, were ſuch as themſelves could not once perform, or it may be think they ever ſhould. Great things both in nature and grace, come from ſmall and contemptible beginnings.

MEDIT. IV.

Upon the ſight of many ſticks lodged in the branches of a choice fruit Tree.

HOw is this Tree batter'd with ſtones, and loaded with ſticks that have been thrown at it? whilſt thoſe that grow about it being barren, or bearing harſher fruit, eſcape untouched! Surely, if its fruit had not been ſo good, its uſage had not been ſo bad: and yet it is affirmed, that ſome trees, as the Walnut, &c. bear the better, for being thus bruiſed and battered.

Even thus it fares, in both reſpects with the beſt of men; the more holy, the more envied and perſecuted; every one that paſſes by will have a fling at them. Methinks I ſee, how devills and wicked men walk round about the people of God whom he hath encloſed in arms of power, like ſo many boyes about an Orchard, whoſe lips water to have fling at them. But God turns all the ſtones of reproach into precious ſtones to his people: they bear the better for being thus batter'd.

And in them is that ancient obſervation verified.

Creſcunt virtutem palmæ, creſcuntque Coronæ
Mutantur mundi prælia, pace Dei.

The Palmes and Crowns of virtue thus increaſe;
Thus perſecution's turned into peace.

Let me be but fruitful to God in holineſs, and ever abounding in the work of the Lord, and then, whilſt devils and men

are

are flinging at me, either by hand or tongue persecutions, I will sing amidst them all with the divine Poet.

What open force, or hidden charm
Can blast my fruit, or bring me harm
While the inclosure is thine arm.

Herb. Poem. p. 125.

MEDIT. V.

Upon the gathering of choice fruit, from a scrubbed unpromising Tree.

WOuld any man think to find such rare delicious fruit upon such an unworthy Tree to appearance as this is? I should rather have expected the most delicious fruit from the most handsom and flourishing Trees; but see I must neither judge the worth of Trees or Men, by their external form and appearance. This is not the first time I have been deceived in judging by that rule; under fair and promising out-sides I have found nothing of worth, and in many deformed despicable bodies, I have found precious and richly furnished souls. The sap and juice of this scrubbed Tree is concocted into rare and excellent fruits, whilst the juice and sap of some other fair, but barren Trees, serves only to keep them from rotting, which is all the use that many souls which dwell in beautiful bodies serve for; they have (as one saith) *animam pro sale*; their souls are but salt to their bodies. Or thus,

The only use to which their souls do serve
Is but like salt, their bodies to preserve.

If God have given me a sound soul, in a sound body, I have a double mercy to bless him for; but whether my body be vigorous and beautiful or not, yet let my soul be so: For as the esteem of this Tree, so the esteem and true honour of every man rises rather from his fruitfulness and usefulness, than from his shape and form.

MEDIT.

MEDIT. VI.

Upon an excellent, but irregular Tree.

SEeing a Tree grow somewhat irregular, in a very neat Orchard, I told the Owner it was pity that Tree should stand there; and that if it were mine I would root it up, and thereby reduce the Orchard to an exact uniformity. It was replied to this purpose, that he rather regarded the *fruit* than the *form*; and that this slight inconveniency was abundantly preponderated by a more considerable advantage. This Tree, said he, which you would root up, hath yielded me more fruit than many of those Trees which have nothing else to commend them, but their regular scituation. I could not but yield to the reason of this answer, and could wish it had been spoken so loud, that all our Uniformity-men had heard it, who will not stick to root up many hundred of the best bearers in the Lords Orchard, because they stand not in an exact order with other more conformable, but less beneficial Trees, who do *perdere substantiam propter accidentia*, destroy the fruit, to preserve the form.

Not much unlike such foolish men are those
That strive for shadows, and the substance lose.

MEDITATIONS upon a Garden.

MEDIT. I.

Upon the new modelling of a Garden.

A Gentlewoman who had lately seen a neat and curious Garden, returns to her own with a greater dislike of it than ever; resolves to new model the whole plot, and reduce

duce it to a better form, is now become so curious and neat, that not a weed or stone is suffered in it, but all must lye in exquisite order; and what ever ornament she had observed in her neighbours, she is now restless till she see it in her own.

Happy were it thought I, if in an holy emulation, every one would thus endeavour to rectifie the disorders of their own conversation, by the excellent graces they behold in the more heavenly and regular lives of others. Some Christians there are (I wish their number were greater) whose actions lye in such a comely and beautiful order, that few of their neighbours can look upon their examples without self-conviction and shame; but few are so happy to be provoked unto self-reformation but such rare patterns. I see, it is much easier to pull up many weeds out of a Garden, than one corruption out of the heart, and to procure an hundred flowers to adorn a knot, than one grace to beautifie the soul. 'Tis more natural to corrupt man to envy, than to imitate, the spiritual excellencies of others.

MEDIT. II.

Upon the pulling up of a Leek.

A White head, and a green tail! how well doth this resemble an old wanton Lover! whose green youthful lusts are not extinguished, though his white head declares that nature is almost so. Gray hairs should be alwayes match'd with grave deportments, and the sins of youth should rather be the griefs, than pleasures of old age. 'Tis sad when the sins of the soul, like the diseases of the body grow stronger, as nature grows weaker: And it recals to my mind that ancient Observation of *Menander*.

Γέρων ἐρᾳστὴς ἐσχάτη κακὴ τύκη.
Senex amore captus, ultimum malum.
It is the worst of evils to behold
Strong youthful lusts to rage in one that's old.

'Tis a thousad pities, that those who have one foot in the grave, should live as if the other were in hell! that their lusts should be so lively, when their bodies are three parts dead. Such sinful practises bring upon them more contempt and shame, than their hoary heads and reverend faces can procure them honour.

Ovid. 5. Fast.

Magna fuit capitis quondam reverentia cani,
Inque suo pretio ruga senilis erat.
Gray hairs, and aged wrinckles did of old
Procure more reverence than bags of gold.

But alas! how little respect or reverence can the hoary head obtain amongst wise men, except it be found in the way of righteousness? I think, the lowest esteem is too much for an old servant of the devil; and the highest honour little enough for an ancient and faithful servant of Christ.

MEDIT. III.

Upon a heedless tread in a curious Garden.

PAssing through the small divisions of a curious knot, which was richly adorned with rare Tulips, and other beautiful flowers, I was very careful to shun those flowers, which indeed had no other worth to commend them, but their exquisite colours, and unadvisedly trod upon and spoyled an excellent choice herb, which though it grew obscurely, yet had rare physical vertues in it.

When I was made sensible of the involuntary trespass I had committed, I thought I could scarcely make the Owner a better compensation, than by telling him, that herein (though against my will) I did but tread in the footsteps of the greatest part of the world, who are very careful (as I was) to keep their due distance from splendid, though worthless Gallants; mean while trampling upon, and crushing under

under foot, the obscure, but most precious servants of God in the world. As little do they heed these most excellent persons, as I did this precious herb.

Summa ingenia in occulto sæpe latent, saith *Plautus*.
Rare wits and herbs sometimes do sculk and shrink
In such blind holes, as one would little think.

For my own part, I desire to tread upon no man with the foot of contempt and pride, much less upon any good man; and that I may not, it concerns me to look before I step, I mean, to consider, before I censure: had I done so by this rare Herb, I had never hurt it.

MEDIT. IV.

Upon a withered Posey taken up in the way.

FInding in my walk a Posey, of once sweet and fragrant, but now dry and withered flowers, which I supposed to be thrown away by one that had formerly worn it: Thus said I, doth the unfaithful world use its friends, when providence hath blasted and withered them; whilst they are rich and honourable, they will put them into their bosoms, as the Owner of this Posey did, whilst it was fresh and fragrant, and as easily throw them away, as useless and worthless things, when thus they come to be withered. Such usage as this *Petronius* long since complained of.

Cum fortuna manet vultum servatis amici,
Cum cecidit turpi versitis ora fuga. (i. e.)
Are they in honour? then we smile like friends,
And with their fortunes all our friendship ends.

But this loose and deceitful friendship stinks so odiously in the very nostrils of nature, that a *Heathen Poet* severely taxes, and condemns it as most unworthy of a man.

Turpe sequi casum, & fortunæ cedere, amicum
Et nisi sit fœlix esse negare suum. (i. e.)
'Tis base to change with fortune, and deny
A faithful friend, because in poverty.

And is this indeed the friendship of the world? Doth it thus use them whom once it honoured? Then Lord! let me never seek its friendship. O, let me esteem the smiles and honours of men less, and thy love and favour more. Thy love is indeed unchangeable, being pure, free, and built upon nothing that is mutable; thou never servest thy frieds as the world doth its darlings.

MEDIT. V.

Upon the sudden withering of a Rose.

BEeing with my friend in a Garden, we gathered each of us a Rose; he handled his tenderly, smell'd to it but seldom and sparingly, I alwayes kept it to my nose, or squeezed it in my hand, whereby in a very short time, it lost both colour and sweetness, but his still remained as sweet and fragrant as if it had been growing upon its own root. These Roses said I, are the true Emblems of the best and sweetest creature-enjoyments in the world; which being moderately and cautiously used and enjoyed, may for a long time yield sweetness to the Possessor of them; but if once the affections seize too greedily upon them, and squeeze them too hard, they quickly wither in our hands, and we lose the comfort of them; and that either through the souls surfeiting upon them, or the Lord's righteous and just removal of them, because of the excess of our affections to them; earthly comforts, like pictures, shew best at a due distance. It was therefore a good saying of *Homer*, ἄνδρα ξεινόδοκω, &c.

Mihi

Mihi nunquam is placet hospes
Qui valde preterque modum odid vel amat.
I like him not who at the rate
Of all his might doth love or hate.

'Tis a point of excellent wisdom to keep the golden bridle of moderation, upon all the affections we exercise upon earthly things, and never to slip those reins, unless when they move towards God, in whose love there is no danger of excess.

MEDIT. VI.

Upon the sudden withering of beautiful flowers.

HOw fresh and orient did these Flowers lately appear, when being dash'd over with the morning dew, they stood in all their pride and glory, breathing out their delicious odours, which perfumed the air round about them, but now are daver'd and shrivelled up, and have neither any desirable beauty, or savour in them.

So vain a thing is the admired beauty of creatures, which so captivates the hearts, and exercises a pleasing tyranny over the affections of vain man, yet is as suddenly blasted as the beauty of a flower.

Forma bonum fragile est quantumque accedit ad annos,
Fit minor & spacio carpitur ipsa suo.
Nec semper violæ, nec semper lilia florent,
Et riget amissa spina relicta rosa.
Tempus erit quo vos speculum vidisse pigebit,
Jam veniunt rugæ quæ tibi corpus arent, &c.
How frail is beauty? in how short a time
It fades! like Roses which have past their prime.

So

So wrinckled age the fairest face will plow,
And cast deep furrows on the smoothest brow.
Then where's that lovely tempting face? alas!
Your selves would blush to view it in a glass.

If then thou delightest in beauty (O my soul!) chuse that which is lasting. There is a beauty which never fades, even the beauty of holiness upon the inner man; this abides fresh and orient for ever, and sparkles gloriously when thy face (the seat of natural beauty) is become an abhorrent and loathsom spectacle. Holiness enammels and sprinkles over the face of the soul with a beauty upon which Christ himself is enamour'd, even imperfect holiness on earth is a Rose that breaths sweetly in the bud; in heaven it will be full blown, and abide in its prime to all eternity.

MEDIT. VII.

Upon the tenderness of some choice Flowers.

HOw much care is necessary to preserve the life of some Flowers? They must be boxed up in the Winter, others must be covered with glasses in their springing up, the finest and richest mould must be sifted about the roots, and assiduously watered, and all this little enough, and sometimes too little to preserve them, whilst other common and worthless flowers grow without any help of ours; yea, we have no less to do, to rid our Gardens of them, than we have to make the former grow there.

Thus stands the case with our hearts, in reference to the motions of grace and sin. Holy thoughts of God must be assiduously watered by prayer, earthed up by Meditation, and defended by watchfulness; and yet all this is sometimes too little to preserve them alive in our sours. Alas! the heart is a soyl that agrees not with them, they are tender things, and

and a small matter will nip and kill them. To this purpose is the complaint of the divine Poet.

Who would have thought a joy
so coy?
To be offended so,
and go
So suddenly away.
Hereafter I had need
take heed.
Joyes among other things
have wings,
And watch their opportunities of flight,
Converting in a moment day to night. *Herbert*

But vain thoughts, and unholy suggestions, these spread themselves, and root deep in the heart, they naturally agree with the soyl; so that it is almost impossible at any time to be rid of them. 'Tis hard to forget what is our sin to remember.

MEDIT. VIII.

Upon the strange means of preserving the life of Vegetables.

I Observe that plants and herbs are sometimes killed by frosts, and yet without frosts they would neither live nor thrive; they are sometimes drowned by water, and yet without water they cannot subsist; they are refreshed and cheered by the heat of the Sun, and yet that heat sometimes kills and scorches them up. Thus lives my soul, troubles and afflictions seem to kill all its comforts; and yet without these, its comforts could not live. The Sun-blasts of prosperity sometimes refresh me, and yet those Sun-blasts are the likeliest way to wither me; By what seeming contradictions

is

is the life of my ſpirit preſerved? what a myſtery? what a Paradox is the life of a Chriſtian?

Welcome my health, this ſickneſs makes me well;
Med'cines adieu;
When with diſeaſes, I have liſt to dwell,
I'le wiſh for you.
Welcom my ſtrength, this weakneſs makes me able.
Powers adieu:
When I am weary grown of ſtanding ſtable,
I'le wiſh for you.
Welcom my wealth, this loſs hath gain'd me more
Riches adieu:
When I again grow greedy to be poor
I'le wiſh for you.
Welcom my credit, this diſgrace is glory:
Honours adieu:
When for renown and fame I ſhall be ſorry:
I'le wiſh for you.
Welcom content, this ſorrow is my joy.
Pleaſures adieu,
When I deſire ſuch griefs as may annoy:
I'le wiſh for you.
Health, ſtrength, and riches, credit, and content
Are ſpared beſt ſometimes, when they are ſpent.
Sickneſs, and weakneſs loſſe, diſgrace, and ſorrow
Lend moſt ſometimes, when moſt they ſeem to borrow.

And if by theſe contrary and improbable wayes, the Lord preſerves our ſouls in life, no marvel then we find ſuch ſtrange and ſeemingly contradictory motions of our hearts, under the various dealings of God with us, and are ſtill reſtleſs in what condition ſoever he puts us; which reſtleſs frame was excellently expreſſed in that pious Epigram of reverend *Gataker*, made a little before his death.

I thirſt

I thirſt for thirſtineſs, I weep for tears;
well pleas'd I am to be diſpleaſed thus:
The only thing I fear is want of fears;
ſuſpecting I am not ſuſpicious.
I cannot chuſe but live, becauſe I dye
And when I am not dead, how glad am I?

Yet, when I am thus glad for ſence of pain
and careful am leſt I ſhould careleſs be
Then do I grieve for being glad again,
and fear leſt careleſsneſs take care for me.
Amidſt theſe reſtleſs thoughts, this reſt I find
For thoſe that reſt not here, there's reſt behind.

Jam tetigi portum valete.

FINIS.

A TABLE of the Contents of this Treatise, both Natural and Spiritual.

Natural.

A

Page

Abuse *of Cattel* 205,206
Actions *and seed reseembled* 147,148
Accountableness *of workmen to their Masters* 8
Arable *Land how qualified* 36.37
Altitude *of the clouds* 87

B

...ns when full, fill carnal hearts with ... 156. *Some have no* Barns, *yet* ... *joy* 156
...s, *their bondage by sin* 205,206
...gs, *incident to Corn* 115
..., *where erected* 5

C

... *of beasts how narrow* 208
... *with Wheat, its usefulness* ... *it self, its* ... 167, 168

Corn

Spiritual.

A

Page

Actions *eternal in their effects* 147,148
Account *of Ministers great* 8
Afflictions *parallel'd with threshing, in five things* 160,161, &c.
Afflicted *Saints Reflections* 163
Apostates *Reflections* 69,118

B

Barrenness, *the Christians reproach,* 12 *Its causes,* 55. *its danger* 56,57,58
Beauty *of glorified bodies* 103
Body *of man, its noble structure, commodious scituation, and excellent configuration* 207
Business *of a Christian, and of the Husbandman, parallel'd in four things* 18, 19,20

C

Carelessness *reproved by the worldlings diligence* 143
Caius Marius Victorius *his strange conversion* 144
Duke of Condy *his rare saying* 123

Cen-

Natural.

Page

Corn *cannot resist the Sickle* 131. *Received into the Reapers bosom*, 131. *Corn not to be reaped till ripe; signs when it is so* 132,133

Crop, *the first usually the best* 10

D.

Death *of seeds, how to be understood* 101

Deeds *for estates, how carefully proved and preserved* 226

Diligence, *the thriving way* 24

Diligence, *a credit to men* 25

Disappointments, *grievous to Husbandmen* 6

Dressing *of ground* 4

Drought *follows a glut of rain* 85

E

Ease, *how little the beasts have* 207

Enclosures, *the end of them* 3

End *of all Husbandry* 7

Estates *increased, and preserved how* 26

Expectation *of Harvest*, 122. *the grounds*

Spiritual.

Page

Censorious *persons reproved* 111

Church, *Gods fee*, 5. *how purchased*, 3. *how dressed*, 4. *what expected from it*, 6. *its dignities* 11

Christ *is sufficient portion to the poor* 156

Childrens *souls neglected, how sinful* 201,202

Comforts *for declining Christians* 48, 49

Competency *best for Christians* 37,38, 39,40

Conviction *parallel'd with plowing, in nine particulars* 64,65,66,67

Conversion *in old age a wonder* 144

D

Declining *of grace, how far* 46,47

Deceived *souls, their Reflections* 78

Death *and reaping parallel'd, in five things* 131,

Decayes *in grace lamented*

Diligence *in Religion honourable, beneficial and comfortable*

Delight *spiritual, whence it flows*

Discouragement *should not seize Ministers, though they see no present fruit* 46,

Disobedient *children, their sin aggravated*

E

Earthly *employments suit earthly*

Elezarius *his excellent saying to his wife*

Elect *souls Reflection*

Natural.

Page

grounds and incouragements of it 124,125

F

Famine, occasioned by drought, 90. Its effects terrible 91 92
Fowls, enemies to seed 155
Frosts conduce to a good Harvest, how 72
Fruits shaken, and when 186, 187

G

Gathering in of fruit, the Emblem of the end of the world 186,187
Graffing, the manner of it shewn 180
Graffs, their danger till they take hold of the stock, 181. All do not thrive alike in the stock 183

H

[illegible]vest, the joy thereof described 158, 159
[illegible] when catching, what Husband[illegible] do 130
[illegible], its use in Husbandry 72
[illegible], their use 4
[illegible] preserved by labour 56
[illegible] carefully fed and dressed 200

Spiritual.

Page

Examination of our selves needful 166
Example of the multitude no plea 189
Evidences for heaven, and Land compared, in seven things 24

F

Famine spiritual, the sorest of judgements 91,92.93.94,95
Few saved, and their Emblem in nature 188,189
Feeding beasts, their plenty and liberty 216
Formalists Reflections 60,196

G

Gifts, how excelled by grace 74,75,76
Gospel, its first entertainment best 10
Removed by reason of barrenness 11
Grace carried through many dangers 116,117,118
Gracious principles parallel'd with seed 71,72,73
Gracious and growing souls Reflections 42,77,136

H

Harvest of glory, what, and when 125
Healthful Christians Reflection 104
Humble hearers profit most 10
Hypocrisie parallel'd with chaff 166, 167. It acts like grace 109,110, 111,112
Hypocrites their Reflections 34,41, 169

Hus- Hy-

Natural.

Page

Husbandmen *their work ſ. ending*, 19
yet have ſome reſting dayes 20

I

Influences *of heaven neceſſary to produce and ripen fruits* 81,82
Joy *natural, four ſorts of it* 152,153
Joy *of Harveſt, the cauſes and grounds of it* 154,155,156,157
Joy *of Harveſt; but a gift of common providence* 155

L

Labourers, *their hands ſufficient for them and theirs* 8
Land *when ſpent, how recovered* 45
Labours *of Husbandmen ends at, and ſometimes before death*, 21. *It ſweetens their bed* 26
Loſt *Cattel, how recovered* 210,211

M

Mowing *when and what it repreſents* 138
Multiplicity *of work, and work-men in Husbandry* 7,18
Miry *places barren*, 54. *What cauſes Mire* 55

Spiritual.

Page

Hypocrites *inſide opened at death* 195

I

Ignorance *inexcuſable in Husbandmen* 14,15
Joy *ſpiritual, how excellent*, 153, 154. *'Tis perfected when natural joy is finiſhed*, 154. *Peculiar mercies, the grounds of it*, 155. *God its object* 155
Ingratitude *for the mercy of our creation, how great a ſin* 206,207,208

L

Learning, *no plea before God* 17
Lingring *Saints Reflection* 12
Longing *for heaven, what, and by whom* 12
Loſt *ſinners parallel'd with ſtrayed Cattel, in five particulars* 211,21
Lycurgus *his Law for parents* [illegible]

M

Maintenance *due to Miniſters*
Maturity *of grace, three ſigns of*
Maturity *of ſin, ſix ſignes of*
Miniſters *muſt be judicious,* [illegible] *red with clouds, in three* [illegible] 86,87. *Their Reflections*

Na-

Natural.

Page

N.

Nature, *and natural causes, what* 81

Negligence *in Summer, upon presumtion of fair weather, a folly* 142

O

Occasion *to be eyed by Husbandmen* 140

Opportunities *of plowing, sowing, reaping once lost, irrecoverable for that year* 140,141

P

Pleasure *much in Husbandry* 31

Plowing *requires judgment, 63. 'Tis hard work* 84

Plow *rends the earth, discovers things hid under the surface* 65

Plowing, *a preparatory and respective work, 66. It kills weeds, 67. Best after rain* 67

Plow-man *must make no baulks in good ground* 67

[illegible] *to be provided for* 221

[illegible] *when extreame a snare* 39

[illegible] *in Husbandment commendable* 139

Rain

Spiritual.

Page

Ministry *its scope and end, what* 8

Moral *persons Reflections* 150

N

Names, *what vain things in Religion* 22

Neglecting *soul seasons dangerous* 152, 143

O

Obedience *must be free and chearful* 50

Ordinances, *their influences, what, and whence* 81,82.97

Original *sin compared with sap* 175

P

Parents *convinced of their sin* 203

Pains *of Ministers visible, sometimes in the peoples lives* 9

Patience *of Saints its grounds* 122,123, 124,125

Poor, *if godly, incouraged greatly* 219

Presumptuous *persons Reflection* 112, 183,144

Presence *of God singular in his Church* 13

Profane *persons Reflection* 149

Persecutors *Reflections* 163

Prayer, *the golden key to open mystical clouds* 8

Professors *barren, fewel for hell* 139, 194

Prospe-

Natural.

Page

R

Rain *is from heaven, falls by divine appointment, great difference in it, warm rain most beneficial former and latter both needful, obtained by prayer* 82,83,84,85
Reaping *the fit season thereof* 129

S

Seed-corn, *how qualified and prepared,* 71. *Advantaged by early sowing,* 72. *much vigour in a small seed* 73
Seeds *produce their own kind* 146
Springing *of seeds and plants, whence* 81,8. *cannot be hindred when the time comes,* 102
Sowing *done in hope, and in season* 102
Stalk *potentially in a small seed* 73
Summer *why appointed* 141

T

Tares, *their resemblance to wheat* 108
Threshing *the ancient manner of it,* 160 *the use and end of it* 161
Thresh-

Spiritual.

Page

Prosperous *sinners, and feeding beasts parallel'd, in five particulars* 217, 218
Prudence *in Christians commended and urged* 14,141

R

Regenerate *souls their Reflections* 183, 184
Recovery *of lost sinners by Christ opened and parallel'd with seeking of lost Cattel* 210,211,212
Resurrection *parallel'd with springing Corn* 101,102
Resurrection *the glory of that state* 107, 108

S

Seed-corn *how to be steeped before it be sown* 8
Sickly *Christians their comfort* 10
Sincere *souls Reflection* 59, 170
Sloth *inexcusable in Christians* 2

Straying *from God its emblem* 21
Stock *advantaged to be removed our natural stock*
Support *for declining souls*

T

Tree, *the emblem of the*
Toad, *how the sight a She,*

Natural.

Page

...ing corn, what it resembles 162
... when dead, cut down 192
... how laden with fruit, 186,187.
... leaned, so they fall 194

V

Valleys most fruitful 10
Variable weather in Harvest 141
Ungrassed fruit harsh, 147. The cause thereof 176
Vexation to Husbandmen to be hindred in their business 9
Union with the geaff and stock 180

W

Weariness of labourers at night 7
Weeds pernicious to Corn 115
Winnowing, its use and end, 165,166
Winter sweetned by Summers providence 142

Spiritual.

Page

Thief on the cross, no president to careless ones 143
To morrow a new day, the first ground of that proverb in Greece 141,142

V

Unregenerate persons cannot bring forth good fruit 174, 175
Ungodly persons Reflections 106
Voluptuous sinners Reflections 218
Upright ones Reflections 34
Union with Christ, in eight resemblances 181,182,283

W

Wages, what offered by Christ and the world 28,29
Weak gifts sanctified, yield strong consolation 178
Winnowing of souls by judgment 166, 167
Worldlings Reflections 27,41

FINIS.

GLASGOW UNIVERSITY LIBRARY